

Korea Calls!

A STORY
of
THE EASTERN
MISSION
FIELD

Lois Hawks Swinehart

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BY LOIS HAWKS SWINEHART

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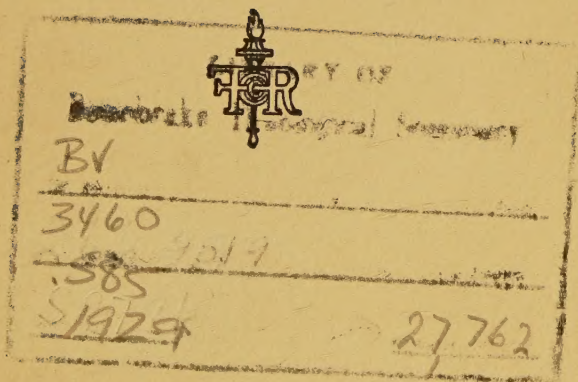
KOREA CALLS!

A Story of the Eastern Mission Field

By

LOIS HAWKS SWINEHART

Author of "Jane in the Orient,"
"Sarangie," etc.



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*To the Memory
of
My Brother
H. A. Hawks*

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I

FRANCES VOLUNTEERS

MRS. EMILY ALDERMAN was indignant. She did not like shocks, and had a great objection to sensations and agitations that disturbed the equilibrium of her well-ordered existence. She had refused consistently to have her digestion upset by emotions of any kind since the day she had had a nervous collapse after hearing, suddenly, that oil had been discovered on her farm. So, to-day when her niece, her only niece, announced that she had decided to become a missionary—a foreign one—to leave her father and her Aunt Emily and to give her life to the work of teaching the Bible to women of another country, Mrs. Alderman had remained perfectly motionless, putting her thumb on her pulse to be sure of her heart's action, before telling Frances Holt to repeat what she had just said.

“A foreign missionary! Am I hearing you right?” she asked. “What an idea! A girl reared as you have been! When did you take up such a notion?”

“It isn't a notion, it's a conviction,” the girl replied. “I have known ever since I was in the fifth grade that I was going to be a missionary,

but you see, I didn't want to be one, and the fight lasted all through the grammar grades, the high school and into college. And it took the Erdan lectures to make me give over. But I've done it. I'm in it for life, and the morning stars sing for me. The kingdom of heaven is in my heart right now. Oh, Aunt Emily, I'm a happy girl!"

"Fanaticism! Religious fire-works, pin-wheels and sky-rockets—all of it! What are you going to do with your musical education? With the career your father has planned for you and worked for every minute since the day you were born?"

"I don't like careers, especially mapped-out ones. I want to live my own life."

"Just like all the others of this new generation. What kind of a missionary will you make if you disobey your father? It is not a fit undertaking for a girl reared as you have been. In my day, no young woman ever thought of such a thing. Certain men, ably fitted, were always selected and consecrated to the work of carrying the Gospel to the heathen,—and they were especially prepared,—and ——"

"But Aunt Emily, this isn't your day, and girls do go to teach the Bible in foreign lands. The Lord is no respecter of persons, and He has told me that He has a work for me that no one else can do, and that He will be with me, as I go to do it. And that's glory for me, and I'm going."

"You don't know what you are talking about, Frances Holt; you haven't thought it through. You're carried away with a romantic notion and if you go to some foreign country at your age, you'll spend the bloom of your girlhood in an impossible undertaking. You'll get all sunburned and tanned,—and look like the natives,—and then you'll come back with nothing to show for it but a foreign dialect and a lot of stories about queer people and queerer ways of living."

"And an experience and peace that will thrill in my heart for all time. You cannot understand this, Aunt Emily. You have never read your Bible enough to believe it."

"Well, of all things, to tell me that! The impudence of this generation!"

She released her pulse, and took up her knitting.

"No wonder my heart is missing beats. Such a thing was never *heard* of in our family."

Frances Holt sat upon the library table, in a graceful pose,—the arches of her high instep were the only thrust in the straight line from knee to toe. She was swinging her feet nervously.

"I've just one life to live, and I want to get a tremendous satisfaction out of the living of it," she went on.

"But I do not see where the satisfaction comes in," replied her aunt. "You will ruin your chances of marriage, and you will never have any children."

It's against all reason and common sense. Hasn't your father forbidden your going? "

"He told me I couldn't go, but he'll change his mind. Father and I always get together eventually."

Mrs. Alderman's needles clicked sharply, as she knit off the last stitch, and started a new row.

"Ex-act-ly. Fred Holt has been led around by a woman since the day he was born. Why doesn't he say you can't go and stand by it? He loved his mother, and he adored his wife, and now he worships you. Do you know that you will kill him, if you leave him and your home to fly off at this tangent? "

"He's coming with me. I've worked it all out. After I have been there a few years, he can come to live with me. I want to go to Korea, but perhaps I shall be sent to China. I shall have to go where the Committee sends me."

"Such twaddle I never heard. I want you to know I'm dead against the whole thing."

"Why, Aunt Emily, I thought you belonged to a missionary society! "

"Belonging to a missionary society is one thing, and seeing you throw your young life away is quite another."

"But what are missionary societies for? Don't you ever talk about being missionaries yourselves, at your meetings? "

Mrs. Alderman's whole attention was concentrated upon a dropped stitch. She took it up with the utmost attention, then relaxed, and surveyed her niece in shocked reflection.

"I never heard such nonsense. Missionary meetings aren't held for the purpose of sending out missionaries. They are to awaken interest in foreign countries. I haven't attended my society for a long time, but it is just because I can't get out very easily."

"Travelogues and Chautauquas will awaken a lot of interest too, and a dandy movie with an Oriental setting will awaken a whole theatre full of interest, and keep it awake too. I don't see where you get your money's worth out of a missionary meeting that doesn't send out missionaries."

Mrs. Alderman's thumb was on her pulse again. "It skips every sixth beat, and I'm sure my blood pressure is up," she remarked. "It's not surprising when such spiritual things as missionary societies are talked about in the same breath with movies. What are we coming to, if this keeps up?"

"But I'm talking straight, Aunt Emily. If you honestly believe that Jesus Christ said that you should teach others the things He has taught you, your missionary meetings would be the liveliest things in town. If every one of your members

really wanted her children to be missionaries, your meetings would be so thrilling that you would have to police the crowds to keep them back."

"Anyone would know why I have hardening of the arteries if they could listen to you! I never heard anything so unconventional, so upsetting."

"But it's the truth. Where are foreign missionaries to come from if not from missionary societies?"

"You are talking nonsense again. There's fitness in everything. Let those go to foreign countries who are adapted to that kind of life, I say. If women must go, let them be the kind that have passed the marrying age,—middle-aged women. They are the ones to convert the heathen."

"Right here I want to tell you, Aunt Emily, we don't go to convert the heathen. The Lord does that. We go to teach the Bible, to those who know nothing about it."

"But your life,—your future—your beauty! Frances Holt, you shall *not* throw them away. If this thing has such a grip on you, send someone in your place. There's Sarah Brown, couldn't marry the man she wanted. She's middle-aged, meek, and disappointed. She needs something to take up her time, and she's always been a church worker. Your father will pay her salary, or if he won't, I will. Anything to prevent such a blind waste and sacrifice as you propose."

"I don't want anyone to go in my place. I want the thrill of being a missionary myself. Sarah Brown had better take the veil in a convent, than go out to the Orient to teach girls who are quite as alive as I am. Foreign missions demand workers of fire and 'pep,' and you simply have to have a college degree, in this day, to work among the girls of China, Korea, Japan or India. All the world's going to school."

"But it's your life, your future, that I'm talking about,—not thrills. This whole generation is upset. You are all after sensations, excitement, change,—it's romance that's carrying you away like this. It's the fascination of doing the unusual,—something spectacular,—of going into a far country, and all that!"

Mrs. Alderman had risen to her feet. Her voice was high, and shook with anger—it was vibrant too, with a note of pleading. She was fighting for the future and happiness (as she saw it) of this headstrong girl.

Frances' head was turned away from the speaker, one flushed cheek just visible.

"I resent that, too. It's not fair, and it hurts horribly. I'm not posing for effect, and I'm not a fanatic either. If I were after the sensational life, I'd stay in America."

"Then what under the sun are you after? What possible reason can you have for leaving

everything that's dear, to go away to some benighted spot to spend the rest of your natural life,—I don't see! If it's the excitement of a trip to the Orient, I'll give you that."

Frances' feet were upon the floor in an instant, and her eyes were blazing. "No, you won't, Aunt Emily, this discussion is ended. You understand nothing of the force that lies behind missions and missionaries. You just don't get it,—that's flat. It's terribly warm in this house; I'm going down to the pool for a swim."

"What would you do with a girl like that? Nice beginning for a benevolent career!" Mrs. Alderman was talking to herself. With a halting step she moved to the side of the room where the French door opened into the sun parlour. She sank heavily into an easy chair, and gave close attention to unraveling the tangle of her knitting. Her entrance had disturbed a great shaggy cat that arose from a sunlit spot, stretched himself luxuriously, then rubbed against her knee and stood blinking at her from his round, yellow eyes. Two little paroquettes surveyed her from between the bars of their cage, then exchanged inquisitive twitterings, for her appearance at this hour was irregular, and something in the arrangements of the home must be awry.

Mrs. Alderman was plainly upset, and when her knitting fell from her hands, she did not see Absa-

lom pounce upon it and roll himself about in the tangled web. Her head was thrown back against the great chair, and her eyes were closed. She was a pathetic figure. The fine lines in the ivory of her skin were drawn sharply about the sagging muscles of her chin and throat. Her thin red lips were pressed tightly together to control the nervous quiver of a sensitive mouth, and a deep frown corrugated her forehead. A long time she sat there.

“A foreign missionary,—I never dreamed it for her, she wasn’t reared that way, and she will ruin her life,” she soliloquized. “I can’t imagine what she is thinking of to take up such a notion. Missionaries are born, not made. Why, she swims and plays tennis, and she’s the most popular girl in her set. What equipment is that for a missionary? None, I say. It’s all absurd, and she ought to be taken away from influences that put such fanatical notions in her head. She shall not wreck her life in such an insane undertaking. I won’t let her.”

There was a noise of rattling cups, and of flapping shoes, when Poinsettia, the black cook, entered with a tray of cakes and tea.

“Fo’ creation’s sake, Miss Emily,” she burst out, “that Absalom’s makin’ a cocoon o’ himself in your ya’n. Ain’t you well, honey? Yo’ looks like yo’ was all in, and short ’f breath. It’s the heat,

and the dampness o' dis house. Everythin's a-mouldin' and a-mouldin' this summer, and if yo' and Mr. Fred doan go down to de coas' somewheres soon you's goin' to hit tribulation. I sees dat."

Poinsettia was a part of the household equipment, and as indispensable as the refrigerator or the furnace. Her exits and her entrances were never questioned, and in any domestic crisis she was always about. She drew a table to Mrs. Alderman's side, put the tray upon it, then dropped to her knees on the floor and struggled to catch and release the cat from the tangled web. Mrs. Alderman did not open her eyes. She wanted to be left alone. She wanted isolation and quiet, and she wanted the garrulous Poinsettia to leave the room. But even Miss Emily never thought of ordering Poinsettia to do anything she didn't want to. She was a family resource,—a fixture too valuable to be interfered with or fussed.

"Where're the spirits of ammonia?" demanded Mrs. Alderman. "I shall go to my room for the rest of the day. Tell my brother I'll not be down for dinner. Absalom ought to be put in the garage, and I'm wondering if Rip has repotted the ferns."

"'Tain't no use puttin' your trust in dat Rip. He cain't stay 'wake long 'nuff to do nothin' but get fed. Mistah Fred done sent him up from de

mill wid a special sack of coan meal, for by which he's 'spectin' me to make batter bread for breakfast, and like as not he's snorin' in de garriage dis minut. Now you jes' know somethin's frettin' you, Miss Emily, and I'se supposin' what it is. When dat chile come into de kitchen dis afternoon, and tole me she was a-goin' to a heathen land, I felt like I was hit in de middle, an', Miss Emily, dat's de way you looks right now, dis very, blessed minut."

"Did she tell you she was going to be a missionary?"

"She did sho', right when my hands was in de biscuit dough, and I couldn't 'spress my emotions. Miss Emily, dat chile ain't goin' to be allowed to go 'way off to kingdom-come to throw herse'f away, is she?"

"I've nothing to do with her decision. Don't stand there asking stupid questions. Help me to my feet; my knees may give under me. Those ferns ——"

"Now doan' you worry about dem plants, that Rip'll fix 'em up right this day, or I'll bus' his head wide open. It's dat chile I'm a-thinkin' about. Miss Emily, such a thing ain't ought to be allowed. It's a perversion o' natur. She's de pretties' o' all de Holt kin, and her father cain't hardly turn his eyes offen her. And I ain't never heard befo' o' dis here Korea she's advertisin'. I'se a disbelievin'

der ain't no such location. Somebody's mixed her up on settlements."

"Did she tell you why she had taken up this idea?"

Mrs. Alderman was leaning upon Poinsettia's shoulder, as the two walked back through the library into the hall, and began the ascent of the long stairway.

"No, she didn't. She just asked me didn't my preacher ever tell me as dat de Lord meant de Bible to be spread all over de earth, and didn't I believe as it's writ in it about goin' into all de worl' and preachin' to creatures, beginnin' wid de ones in Jerusalum? But I tol' her 'at it was my opinion dat de Lord never intended 'em words for her, and as for de ferrin emigrants in Korea, He dun made 'em, and He'd a ought to put up wid 'em, is what I say—an' it's what anybody ud say what uses his headpiece."

They had reached the landing where a door gave entrance to a room that might have been Mr. Holt's den, but which, in reality, was the lounging place for the three members of the household.

"I am going no further now. I shall stop here until my brother comes home. The grocery boy is calling in the kitchen, I think he wants you."

Poinsettia drew a big chair forward, raised a window, straightened a rug, and snapped the switch of the electric fan, then slowly left the

room. She was reluctant to leave the elderly woman alone, and in a moment her black head and big rolling eyes appeared again from the half-opened door.

"Doan you sit der in misery, a-plaguin' yose'f about dat girl," she counselled. "'Tain't always dey does what dey sets out to do."

Another call from the grocery boy put an end to her flow of philosophy and sympathy, and after her hurried flight, at the sound of the flap of her slippers on the stair, Mrs. Alderman turned the key in the lock with a snap, and relaxed to the davenport. The afternoon was very warm and the room was close, but it was quiet, and she was alone. She sat quite still, staring at the Chinese rug before her. She had loved at other times to trace the intricate detail of the pattern—the odd little club-footed deer holding huge sprays of roses in their mouths—the queer Chinese characters—and directly in the centre the rampant Phoenix arising from their ashes and gazing at each other in mutual wonder at their accomplishment—the butterflies and bats in the border. But now she was astonished to feel that the little bats were malignant shapes, flying at her, that the butterflies were black imps, and the Phoenix birds were harpies. They were foreign, all of them. The characters were cabalistic—the design was all the fancy of an alien people—a people she did not want to think about,

a people that had suddenly become hateful to her. Her heart beat suffocatingly and her head ached.

"How I wish Fred would come home!" She moved restlessly to the desk at her right, and picked up an old daguerreotype. She turned the leather case in her hand to examine the beautifully embossed design. It was done in lilies of the valley, and in daisies. The clasp slipped back, and the two parts of the little frame fell open before her. Lavender brocade velvet padded one side, and the lovely features of a resplendent woman smiled up at her as the light fell aslant the glass, and brought into relief the portrait beneath. The charming face was well set in a frame of dark hair, waved down over a full forehead. Arched eyebrows curved to the line of the straight nose, and a delicate shadow just under the chin made the white shoulders almost transparent.

Frances Holt's mother had been a woman of exceeding beauty and of restless energy and daring, too. Her charm had been of an unusual type and her personality had attracted all who met her. When Fred Holt had brought her home after a brief wedding journey, she had stepped from the door of the village "hack" with the dignity of a princess; and at her arrival every house in the vicinity of the old Holt home had been the centre of excitement. At every window there had been a group of eager women who had nudged and

rubbed elbows as they peered between the folds of the curtains, and they had all thrilled in calculating appraisal of this newcomer.

Alice Holt had been Alice Graham before her marriage, and her home had been in an old North Carolina town set well back among the laurel covered foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Emily Holt remembered well the strange sweetness of her new sister's voice as she greeted her,—the reluctant endings of her slow sentences,—always with a rising inflection of appeal to the listener's discernment. It came back to her now, and she could feel again her fascination. But with this came, too, the recollection of an instant aversion that she had experienced when the new wife thrust out a pretty foot that Fred Holt might take off her rubbers. The cool little gesture of absolute ownership and smug possession of a brother who was her hero,—a demigod since the days when she had rocked his cradle,—had produced a shock of revulsion.

As her handsome brother stooped to the gallant service she had turned her head and clasped her hands tightly behind her to control an impulse to shake the young woman; and even at this day she wondered she had not cried out in protest. How quiet she had been.

II

HER FAMILY

THE Holt Flour Mills and Grain Company had been incorporated by Fred Holt's grandfather in the early eighties of last century. Fayette, at that time, was an enterprising city, whose name appeared upon the time card of one of the trunk lines traversing the state from east to west. It was also a division point for a north and south road that meandered through the fields, following a right of way that loitered under the shade of great oaks and maples with no urge for getting anywhere in particular at any given time. Perhaps a mile from the junction of this line with the main road, stood the mill and its grain elevator. The canal that brought the water to the mill, had its source at the dam two miles up country. The mill George Holt built had been propelled by an overshot water-wheel whose great axle turned two corrugated stones that ground slow but ground exceedingly fine the corn, wheat and rye, brought in by the farmers from all that countryside round about. Custom grinding it had been, with a proportionate toll taken from the owner's grain as the price of the meal.

In years after, this primitive factory was re-

placed by a modern structure with a full equipment of steel rolls, bolts and packers. Turbines became the motive power,—and the creak and rumble and clack of the old-fashioned water-wheel and the archaic stones of the grist mill, gave place to the brisk hum and whirr of the brand new up-to-the-minute plant. This system was known as the patent process of milling. Everything about it was patented—cylinders, centrifugals, bolters, packers and bags—down to the flour produced,—Patent Flour.

Fred Holt had inherited this goodly property. Its management sat easily upon his shoulders, for he found the keenest satisfaction in the game of production and the chances of marketing. It was a fascinating hazard that put to the test his powers of perception and discernment. The market reports were an absorbing excitement to his quick apprehension, and the adventure and quest of gain a tantalizing gamble, and on this day he had closed negotiations for a lot of flour for export and his spirits were high. He slammed the office door behind him and gave over to the thoughts of the keen pleasure before him—a ride with Frances in the new roadster.

As he swung into the driveway at the side of the house, he looked up at the long windows, hoping to see Frances waving to him.

He ran up the steps,—Absalom was at the door

and bounded in before him. Mrs. Alderman opened the door of the den to answer his boyish call. Fred noted the lines in her face, and her pallor. A vague sense of something disagreeable enveloped the home.

"Late for a change! Why don't you say it? Where's Folly? I want her to come out and see the new roadster. What are you staying here in this stuffy room for? Why don't you come out on the porch?"

"Fred Holt, have you bought another auto?"

"Traded in my old one, you know, and this one cost me practically nothing. In a year or two I couldn't have sold that old model for scrap iron. So you see it was a mighty good stroke of business to get rid of her now while the getting was good. Say, just come out and see the new one. She runs like a black snake,—no noise at all and as smooth as oil."

"Have you seen Frances since you came home?"

"No, I'm hunting for her now. She's down at the swimming pool, isn't she? I'm going after her."

"Fred, why didn't you tell me she had made up her mind to be a foreign missionary? Why did you let this thing go right on under my eyes, and me in total ignorance of it all? Why don't you control that girl?"

The light of the boy in his eyes was gone in an instant, his shoulders drooped, and he sat with his hat held tight over his knees.

"Do you suppose I wanted to repeat what I am trying to forget?"

"When did she tell you?"

"The day she came home from that Conference or whatever she went to after we came back from Winthrop. When did she tell you?"

"About three hours ago, and it seems years. And you have known it for weeks, and never said a word to me about it? I expostulated with her, but quite vainly. She says she is certainly going. Do you think she means it?"

"I do. She'll go. My word for that. But I thought,—why, Emily, aren't you a member of the missionary society? I had an idea that you would think she had done a great thing—something that we ought to be proud of her for. I'm all cut up about it. I don't get her viewpoint. I don't understand exactly what she's going for, but I sure thought you would know all about it. Don't you?"

"If you mean I belong to a missionary society, —I do. I was brought up that way, and I always go when I can. But that doesn't mean that I can sit by, supinely, and see Frances ruin her life by becoming a missionary when she's only twenty-two."

"Then there's nothing in it, you think, this propaganda of Jesus Christ?"

"Fred Holt, you make me sick with your senseless insinuations. You're a nice man to talk to me when you haven't been inside a church for a year."

"You don't mean it's a year since young Brush resigned? Fifty-two delicious Sundays. Church bells in the morning,—nice and soothing. Breakfast in bed. Everybody out of the house. The paper,—and a good dinner,—and golf in the afternoon. You aren't jumping on me for that, are you? You see it all comes from not preaching vital things any more. These modern sermons just naturally don't overcome that comfortable Sunday morning inertia. See?"

"You ought to be ashamed of yourself. You were raised to go to church."

"Sure I was. But we believed something in those days. Father always read the Bible to us every morning. And he always prayed about 'sending the Gospel to the waste places of the earth,' or something like that. Say, Emily, I've an idea if he were alive he'd stand for Frances. Maybe it's you who aren't on the side of the angels."

"Do you mean to say that you *want* her to go to Korea?"

"No! But that doesn't keep me from being proud of her."

"But have you thought it all through? Have you carried it to its logical end, this decision of hers? She's throwing her life away. Fred, have you never pictured your grandchildren,—a lovely sturdy boy, and a little girl, looking—well, maybe looking like Alice, romping at your feet and on your knee, in this very home?"

The man looked up with a start. "She's been so much to me. I have never gone that far."

"But you will some day, and the longing for those children will come to you with a force that will be terrible when it is too late. Fred, you are not going to permit her to ruin her life and yours. Tell her to-night and tell her firmly that she cannot go on with this outrageous idea."

"Don't missionaries ever marry?"

"You know they do. But the chances are all the other way, and in this day when every other girl you meet is willing to sell her soul for a husband, it's your duty to see that your daughter stands her rightful chance with the rest of them."

"Of selling her soul, too? I'd rather she'd go to Korea or wherever she's made up her mind to go. Say, but you *are* a hypocrite, Emily. You profess one thing and believe another. How'd you get that way? Come along out and see the new car. We'll run down after Folly."

"No, I'm not going to leave this house to-night. I am the only one in this family with any common

sense. My heart action is all upset, and I'm going to my room. I shall not be down for dinner. Tell Poinsettia not to send up any food to me."

Fred Holt sprang to open the door for her and she passed him with an injured look. Her hand trembled, and the rings upon her fingers clicked.

"Then, what is there in it, if that's the way the church people take it? It's me for the swimming pool and Folly."

Frances Holt bounded up the steps of the tiled pool and called out in delight as she saw her father drive up in the new car. She was a most graceful figure in her green and white bathing suit,—her head, chest and arms reaching in an exuberant poise above her slender hips, and her flying feet just touching the lawn, as she sprang toward him like a young deer.

"Oh, Daddy! What a peach of a car! Is it ours? We sure needed it. That old car was a wreck. Ho, but you're good to look at!" She was on the running board, and her wet arms were about his neck.

"I thought you'd like it. Jump in and we'll try her out."

She ran back to the dressing pavilion, arms outstretched, in exhilaration at the joy of living. In a short time she was back at his side, and gave his shoulder a little pat as she slipped into the front seat.

"Don't take girls as long to dress in these days as it did when I was young. They used to button them up behind, then, and twisted like boa constrictors to do it, too."

"And, Daddy, it surely was funny when they wore long heavy underskirts with dust ruffles on them. Auntie was telling me about the styles of the days when she was a girl. She said they wore three big folds, all lined with haircloth, at the back of their skirts, and long trains dragging in the dust. Oh—oh—it must have been funny!" And the girl went off into a peal of laughter.

"And that wasn't all," said her father. "They used to put whalebone or strips of steel in the collars of their dresses; and these came up high on their necks, and they could hardly look around without scratching their ears. Oh, those were some days!"

"And hair! Why, they did it up Japanese fashion, with a rat under a big roll at the front, and they wore switches and false curls too. It must have been horrid. And—yet—my mother was lovely. Dad, let's drive out to Wildwood for dinner, and let's talk about her. It's been ages since we've been together,—just you and me."

Fred Holt's eyes were turned on her with a light in their dark depths that no one ever saw there but Frances.

"All right, Folly, we'll stop at the country club

and telephone to Poinsettia. Your aunt is threatened with one of her attacks and she isn't good company. She wasn't coming down to dinner anyway." The steering wheel turned easily, and the car sped down a smooth dirt roadway, where the summer grasses—bouncing-bet, purple tassel and goldenrod—spread their beauties on every side. Between the fields of clover and wheat and timothy lay virgin patches of "woods,"—chestnut, oak and maples cast an early twilight, and made a shelter from the heat of the day. The faint purr of the engine was all that broke the stillness for a time. Fred Holt felt the softest touch on his shoulder as a bobbed head nestled down upon it.

"What kind of a dress did Mother wear, Daddy, the day you met her? Let's talk about that. I think I should like to hear it all again. I haven't heard you tell about her for the longest time."

"Well, the dress was white, of some kind,—just the same as I told you last time, and you know all about that day almost as well as I do."

"Never mind, Daddy, I want to hear it again. It's been centuries since you and I have had a long talk. I'll tell you what we will do. Let's cut out Wildwood, and let's run the car over to Dunlap and buy some bacon and a steak, and some onions and things, and let's build a little camp fire in the woods down where it's cool, by the river, and have

a wonderful time all to ourselves. I want to talk over a lot of things with you."

"You've said it, Folly. There's a spring in that next woods that I haven't seen for years, but I think I can find it. Suppose you take the car and drive on to Dunlap, and buy the trimmings for the supper and I'll have the fire ready by the time you get back."

The bobbed head nodded in instant acquiescence,—the car stopped, and the father stepped out. Frances turned the wheel in the direction of Dunlap, running down a side road, little used. Fred Holt climbed an old rail fence, and stepped quickly over the soft turf and dead twigs on the ground beneath the great beeches. He made his way through the underbrush, and among the boles of the trees to the banks of the river where a spring gurgled up from the quicksands and slipped away between the stones. In a few minutes he had gathered a heap of leaves and sticks and brush, and the whole leaped into a bright blaze at the touch of a match. The chips of a fallen oak liberated a delicious odour of woodsy smoke into the warm evening air. There were sizzling hot stones and a crater of glowing coals ready for the camp supper when Frances arrived.

"Oh, Daddy, I've got the tenderest steak you ever put your teeth into, and bacon and onions and roasting ears! And you can't guess,—you never

can—what we're going to have for dessert. There was a funny little grocery woman and she was taking them out of her oven for her own supper, and they smelled so delectable that I made her pop two of them into a bag, and you are not to look at them until we have finished the first course. First we must put the roasting ears right down among the hot stones. You tie the husks over them tight, while I pry these stones apart, so we can drop them down where they will cook and steam in their own moisture, after we cover them with ashes. Now we must get some green sticks ready."

Thick cubes of tender, cool beefsteak were threaded on long green sticks, alternating with slices of bacon and rings of onion. The two picnickers lay down on the brown earth and held their supper above the red coals and laughed and exclaimed like children as the meat sizzled and browned and dripped delicious juices into the fire. Frances shrieked with delight at the funny shapes the broiling steak was drawn into by the heat.

"Isn't it jolly, pal o' mine, and oh, how this supper is going to taste! This one I am broiling is for you, and when yours is burnt to a crisp I'll eat it. You are not keeping your mind on what you are doing, dusty miller. Your stick is jabbed down among the coals this minute, and there is an awful odour of something burning. I don't see how you can expect to broil meat right when you are look-

ing at me all the time, instead of at the end of your stick."

"I was listening to the bullfrogs over there in that pond—bullfrogs all affect me that way. They make me forget a lot of things."

"Well, you poor dear, give me your broiling, and put your head up against that soft wormy tree trunk where the little ants can run down your collar, and you can listen to the frogs and the crickets while I get supper. I am going to spread everything out on that old stump just beyond that beech. We'll have maple leaves for plates, and here's butter to drench the steak. Everything's done to a crisp. Oh, Daddy, you just know you can't wait another second! Open your mouth, here's a bite for you right off my fingers." Her clear laugh joined the notes of an evening thrush. "Now, the rest of it you must eat from the stick. That's the proper way, and now we'll open up the stone to get the corn. Oh-o-o, it's steaming hot and delicious. Of course, it's burnt a little, but butter and salt mixed with the cindery part makes it good. Did you ever smell anything so appetizing?" After a while: "How cool those little puffs of wind are that are coming with the evening air. The stars will be out soon and don't you wish we could stay here all night listening to the sleepy twitterings of the birds and the twisty creakings of the bugs under the damp leaves?"

"I'll say I do, and the owls, Folly, don't forget them."

"Daddy, do you suppose we both like woodsy things and woodsy noises because she did? Let's put more wood on the fire and I'll park my head on your shoulder, and we'll watch the blaze, and begin at 'the dress was white of some kind, just the same as I told you the last time,' go on from there. But first I'll have to brush the flour from your ears, just a little frosty powder that makes you look so millerish."

"It was white and she had on what we called in those days a blazer—a striped flannel coat, and the stripes were the colour of her eyes, and they were the colour of bluebells. It was at a picnic up at the old dam that's washed away now. Jack Auren and I were rowing a boat through a shallow place where the lily pads were thick. As we rounded the bend a canoe swung into the current of the channel. She was coming our way mighty fast, and it looked like a collision sure. I shoved my oar down deep, and held our boat tight, while Jack reached out his long arms and caught a tangle of stems and lily roots that blocked the stream. All this took less time than it takes to tell it and then we both looked up. Sitting in that canoe was the prettiest girl I ever saw. She was laughing at us, and the wind was blowing her brown hair all over her pink cheeks. Her eyes were as blue as

the water, and just that bright. She handled the paddle as skillfully as an Indian."

"Oh, and you knew that minute that you loved her, Daddy? How did it affect you? Describe it this instant. It's delicious to hear you tell it all over again."

"Something quivered through me, and my throat went dry. I turned cold, and then my face burned like a bonfire. Of course it all came from the sun. It was boiling hot that day. I dropped my oar in the excitement, and our boat swung back into the channel, just missing the canoe. That girl turned to look at us and threw back a laugh that thrilled me like a robin's call. Jack grouched terribly because I fumbled my oar. I didn't seem to mind him, for I had lost all interest in the upstream trip. After a while we were running back toward the crowd at the picnic grounds, and making good time, too. At the boat house I told Jack I wouldn't take supper with the others; I was going home, along the canal bank. Jack was rattled anyway because I had made such a fluke in front of that girl, and went off whistling.

"He hadn't seen what I had, that little canoe shooting through the head gates and down the canal.

"It was April, and as the sun set, the colour in the sky behind the saplings and second growth timber exactly matched the purple and coral leaf

buds that were just opening. There were song sparrows in the woods too, and I knew what made them sing. The canoe swirled into an eddy and shot down-stream. I couldn't keep up with it, but I knew a short cut, and believe me, fallen tree trunks, barbed wire fences and swampy places didn't stand in my way any. I never lost sight of her. She was having a glorious time, floating with the current, trailing her hands in the water, and listening to the thrushes."

"Daddy, I love the water too. I like the rush of it when I swim. But go on; this is glorious."

"You know the rest of the story, Folly, as well as I do, and it's too late to tell it again to-night."

"I love your romance, Moth Miller. It is more fascinating than the written ones. I love it especially because I shall never have one of my own. My life will be different from other girls. I am going to leave you, you know, to go to Korea."

His hand tightened over hers, and his breath came quickly.

"You told me that a month ago, girl, and it's been pretty tough for me ever since. Are you going to put the screws on again to-night?"

"It is cruel of you to say that, Daddy. It puts me on the rack too, and I am so helpless in trying to get over to you my reason for wanting to give my life to the service of Jesus Christ."

"I don't see why you can't do that in this

country—teach a Sunday School class and sing in the choir, or if you want something more foreign, go up to New York and do settlement work. Or why don't you run a missionary society right here in Fayette? You could easily put in a couple of years on Emily's."

"More than that, I could give a lifetime to it, and never get anywhere. I don't want a work that others can do so easily. I am going to Korea because the Bible says every child born into the world has the right to know that the Son of God came to earth to live and die for just him."

"Who believes that?"

"I do."

"Does anyone else?"

"People who read their Bibles to inquire of the Lord do."

"And you believe the Lord wants you to leave me to go ten thousand miles away to bring a new religion among people who have nothing in common with us, aliens, who don't think or live as we do—and who get on your nerves when you just look at their pictures?"

"Yes, because there are thousands of girls who will teach Sunday School classes and lead choirs, and do settlement work. I want to go where they need me the most."

"Don't most countries feature their own religions—different varieties according to their longi-

tude or history or climate, or something like that? Some of them are pretty satisfactory systems, too. They don't all of them bow down to 'wooden stones' as we used to sing in *Greenland's Icy Mountains*, every Sunday. I don't see the use of going over there to agitate a new faith among them."

"No, they don't all worship idols. Some of them have wonderful systems of philosophy. But there is just one faith given to men by God, and that is the faith of Jesus Christ, and I want to go where He is not yet known and I want to be the first to bring Him within the ken of minds that are groping after Him. I want the thrill of knowing that if I had not told this story to them, they would never have heard it."

Her voice dropped low as she made this answer and somewhere from out the wood there came the wistful call of a little owl. A branch snapped and fell into the water below.

"And, Daddy, reading the Bible when you believe it, lights up common things around you like that plumpy glowworm over there in the grass, and there are promises and prophecies that affect you like a sunset. I want to help others to understand what the revelation of God is."

"And what is to become of me? There will be no songs in my soul. I shall be so lonesome that I sha'n't see a sunset. And I shall hate the Bible

and everything that belongs to a church, for they are taking you away from me. God took your mother and I have only you left, Folly. You are mine and your leaving will be zero hour for me. Have I no claim upon your life?"

"Oh—that hurts. The glory and vision are dimmed when you say things like that. You have a claim on me, the dearest on earth, but it is not fair to urge it against the claim of the Lord Jehovah, my Creator and yours, when I know He is calling me to leave you, and what is dearest to me to go into a land that He will show me and begin a work that He promises shall lead to results greater than we can ever know. Miller Man, if Christ were the Captain of your soul, you would not break my heart this way, you would say, 'Go, He is here.' Oh, Daddy, I have wanted to pray with you for a long time but I have been afraid to ask you. Won't you put your head down now with me and let God talk to us here in this woodsy place where He is so near?"

"Do I have to lead in prayer?"

"No, if you don't want to."

"Then go ahead."

Two heads that were strangely alike, felt the touch of the damp sweet earth, and a father and daughter listened with ears atune to the voices of the night and the quick breathing of the other.

At last came the prayer.

“Christ, Friend and Master, my father does not feel your actual presence as I do, he does not understand our fellowship. Open his heart to the flame of your love, the touch of your hand, and may he believe that you need me in your work for the redemption of men. Make it clear to him that I am not going to Korea alone—that you go with me, and that it is a full and happy life that lies ahead. Let the melody and sweetness of submission to your lordship come into his heart, and may thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Amen.”

III

IN JAPAN

FRANCES HOLT was sent to Korea as a missionary by the Board of the church that she had chosen in her college days. She made the journey to Japan in the company of the McClurgs—Fayette friends—who were sailing west upon a tour of the Orient. The McClurgs were delighted that this vivacious and charming girl should make one of their party.

At Kobe they left the ship—Frances to take a train for Shimonoseki, the port of Japan farthest west, while the McClurgs were going north to Kyoto to begin their itinerary through the land of the Rising Sun. The routine of quarantine, customs, and baggage inspection had taken an unusual length of time, and the day was well spent before they were free for a tour about the city, on the way to the station.

As they left the wharf Mrs. McClurg and Frances thrilled in open delight at the bazaars, the costumes of the women, and at the sight of the agile and eager little rickshaw men who were coming toward them like a flock of ground birds with wings outstretched. One, especially active, wheeled his brass trimmed carriage to the curb,

drew up before Frances with a flourish, and offered himself for hire.

"Oh!" she said, "he is exactly like his pictures. You know he can't be real. He is painted on a fan and someone is going to wave him back and forth in a minute. Mrs. McClurg, he's mine. How can anyone resist the make-up of his frog-leg tights and his hoppy coat! He ought to be on a tea caddy instead of earning his living. I am not going to drive a bargain with a costume like that. His charges may be outrageous but who cares, when he has to trundle me all over the city!"

Frances and Mrs. McClurg mounted the little perambulators with easy grace, and then turned to watch the man of the party, Mr. McClurg, struggling to get into his rickshaw the wrong way. Instead of backing up and mounting the carriage in the proper fashion, he had stepped on the foot board, scrambled unsteadily into the seat, holding on to the top for support, and almost upsetting the thing with his walrus-like exertions. He grasped tightly the arms of the rickshaw and then looked down to see if his feet were in, too. The little rickshaw man smiled indulgently and patiently wrapped a lap robe about his legs. Frances and Mrs. McClurg urged their coolies forward and diplomatically hid their merriment in exclamations about the darling little houses with tiled roofs and paper doors, facing the street. The miniature

stores, too (ten feet deep) set so low that the customers entered on the ground floor (literally), engaged their attention, and Mr. McClurg was left to recover his self-respect, and adjust his dignity as best he could.

Being bundled up and trundled about in a perambulator, drawn by a human being, will set any man to babbling and repeating nursery rhymes, if it is kept up long enough.

As he rolled along in that absurd little conveyance Mr. McClurg couldn't keep his mind upon the architecture, municipal improvements, the growing population, or upon the street lighting system. Even the traffic cops and the innocuous little policemen holding tight their pretty paper lanterns brought no smile to his eyes. The rickshaw man circled him round a huge Diabutsu, but even this monstrous brazen image had no appeal for him. He felt like a baby and nothing else, and when the coolie pulled up at the railway station, he jumped from the carriage before it stopped and stood stamping on the curb when his wife and Frances rolled up.

"It's never again for me in a baby buggy like that. I've cut two teeth and had the measles since you left me! Maybe *you* want to roll through the streets to the tune of 'Rock me to sleep, mother,' but I don't. It is taxies for me after this—or I walk. Hurry up and join the crowd pushing for

the gate. You'll be late." Mr. McClurg's face was red with his exertions, and glistening points of perspiration stood on his forehead and neck.

Frances had paused to take a kodak of her first rickshaw runner. Mrs. McClurg was listening to the clatter and clack of the wooden clogs worn by the thousands of Japanese women and children as they hurried over the pavement. Neither of them wanted to move on or look farther for amusement.

The attention of the American women was absorbed at once in the passing show before them. High bred Japanese in sombre kimono, with flashes of flame or of orange at the open sleeve, were hurrying by to purchase tickets at the crowded window,—where they would hold up a long line of frantic buyers of more tickets while they inquired the time of the outgoing trains (time card posted up in plain sight)—just as women do in every country under the sun.

Babies in padded coats of printed blue and scarlet and purple and pink, with absurd caps of shirred silk pulled down to their eyes, dangled from the backs of their mothers in relaxed grace. And more babies afoot were being pulled along in gentle urgency by the fathers of the race. It was a gay procession, and wonderfully amusing.

As the travellers were swept into the human current, Mrs. McClurg forgot everything in the excitement of studying at first hand a Japanese

woman and her costume. The tiny Oriental was stumping along at a jog-trot, her scant kimono drawn so tightly about her that she seemed all of one piece. She moved like the leg of an elephant,—bent at the hips and knees, and it was only as her ankles moved separately that you could know that she was a biped—split from the waist down. Her head was thrown forward to balance the thrust of the huge obi tied to her back like a knapsack. Her wooden clogs dragged behind, slapping the pavement at every step. These clogs were raised on standards that sloped to the front. Why she didn't pitch forward on her face was a fascinating gamble to the onlooker. But kimono and obi and clogs—all of them—as curiosities—weren't in it with the Japanese coiffure.

“Come over here, quick!” called Mrs. McClurg to her husband.

Mr. McClurg had stopped to argue with the rickshaw men who had become violent at the moment of settling and were demanding double rates for their services. The American looked the aggravating little extortioners full in the eye, and wanted to knock their heads together for having made a fool of him in two ways. As they turned and picked up their shafts and ran down the street, with their baby buggies wheeling behind them,—in search of more victims to trundle and hold up,—he pulled out his Guide Book of Japan to see if

rickshaw riding was catalogued as a thrill, or an exasperation. And now, here was his wife breathless and eager, waving him on to more pitfalls and Oriental situations. He pushed through the crowd to join her.

"Dear, here's a place for you in this line. Oh, your coat is all wrinkled in the back, and your tie is twisted to one side. I suppose we're being moved along to the station platform. Everybody's going that way and it's so exciting. Japan is everything she's advertised, and, oh, do look at the hair arrangement of the woman just to the right of us. Now don't let her know you're seeing her for the first time, and don't stare. Isn't that headdress the most astonishing decoration yet? What makes it so stiff and wiry? Maybe it's varnished. Do you suppose it could be lacquer? I've always heard that these people were famous for that kind of a finish. It must be slippery and uncomfortable as a horsehair sofa. And see how it's fastened in the geometrical centre with a pink and red tied-and-dyed silk bow. What does it make you think of? A monoplane! That's *just* what I thought, too. See the wings at the side and the long tail, and the high raised part in front. Surely it isn't a wig, and yet how can it be her hair? I never believed before that these people sleep on wooden blocks, but I believe it now. She couldn't put all that ornamentation on a pillow. And her

shoes—just look at them. She's pitching forward all the time, and what keeps her in equilibrium? Every step seems her last. But look now— isn't that effect of her make-up just a joy! Come over to this side. You can get a better view."

"Oh, I don't think she's so very fascinating. She looks just like you'd expect her to after seeing her pictures a thousand times. Isn't this an awful clatter, and somebody's been eating garlic. Let's get out of this. Which way are we going from here? Where's my time card? I say, Julia, do you hear that sound across the city where we came from? It's the blast of the boat's whistle and she's moving out to anchor until to-morrow morning. That boat's been our happy home for sixteen days, and I wish I were on her right now. This country is getting on my nerves. The people are so different somehow, and everything's numbered in small sizes. Just think—what if I'd run out of collars on this trip. They don't have my size—not a single store—I can see that. There isn't a man in this station with a shirt band over 15. We're taking a bigger risk than we thought. What's the use of going up to Kyoto anyway? Don't you know that after Frances leaves us you won't have anyone to talk to but me? And you're going to get mighty tired of it. And the farther I go in this country, the more scared I am that I'm going to have to get down on my knee some-

time, or sit on the floor. Come on, let's go back to the boat."

He had pulled from his pocket the two yards of tickets that were showing thumb marks and heavy signs of wear, and looked particularly at the joints marked "Return passage."

"Keith McClurg! what a time to get homesick when we're just getting started. Of course, we're going on to Kyoto, and Yokohama and Tokyo and all the rest of the places just as we had planned. Don't you hear that other shrill whistle? That must be the Shimonoseki express, and why haven't we been talking to that dear child, and looking out for her comfort instead of standing here and getting all upset?"

"That's no locomotive whistle. There's a donkey engine around somewhere. By golly, there is something with a smoke-stack coming down the track and it's trailing a string of toy cars behind it! And there are people looking out of the windows too!"

"It's a train, Keith, but it's scaled down to fit this fairy land. Oh, where is Frances? She's lost in this crush, and how are we ever to find her? There she is now, waving to us from the platform; don't you see her? Now how am I ever to get to her with all these people rushing to board the train!"

Mrs. McClurg pushed through the crowd to

meet Frances when her way was blocked by a group of Japanese who were mobilized to bid farewell to a popular teacher of a popular university, going on a journey. This teacher was standing (hat in hand and gloves on) at that moment at the step of the coach. His friends were drawn up in half circle formation, speeding his departure in a succession of staccato bows given in a series of little jerks that threatened to bring their heads to the ground. Down and down they went, as though worked by cogs,—every time one bower thought he was through, and started to straighten up, he met one of his compatriots on the downward bow; and to demonstrate his knowledge of what was proper in the way of high ceremonial, he ducked again in a ratchetty succession that would have been perpetual motion if the train hadn't pulled out and left them nothing to bow to.

“Julia, it's no use. We can't reach her now. Traffic's held up until these kimonos stop this bowing jazz. Oh boy, how they do keep it up. That fellow on the train must be their Prime Minister or a prize fighter. I don't care what he is,—let's get out of here. I am not going to board one of those toy coaches. I'd hit my head on the rack. You're all in, and the ship's out there in the harbour. It's only sixteen days back to God's country.”

He had drawn her to one side, and in his eager-

ness to lead the way to a taxi stand, stumbled over a busy little man who was pouring tea from a copper kettle, into glass bottles that he was selling to passengers running for trains.

"Keith McClurg, don't you see what you are doing? Where is my handkerchief? Oh, for mercy's sake let's sit down in this station. I'm short of breath. That child has gone on alone, and what kind of a country do you suppose Korea is?"

"It's something else, likely. But believe me it hasn't anything on this country for shoes and tight skirts and head gear. Everywhere you look there is a man with a kimono belted around him, and a derby hat—and the chances are he thinks this brings him down to the limit in western fashions. Isn't that one in front of you just an echo! If the first class waiting room is where that sign in English says it is, let's go over there and sit down if we can get through this mosaic of apple parings on the floor. If I were the janitor of this station, I'd start a vinegar factory."

"The train is gone and Frances must be aboard. Can't you stop it? Oh Keith, I wanted to say GOOD-BYE to her. She's going on to the ends of the earth, and we may never see her again. I'm so disappointed." Mrs. McClurg put her hands to her face to keep back the tears.

"Keith, that child was the only American on

the train, and she looked so alone, and so appealing in her devotion to her faith. Seraphic is the one word to describe her. And why is she so happy? I don't understand it. Think what she is leaving, and what she is going to! She and her father were inseparable, and she had everything her own way in the home. She might have made a splendid marriage too. But she has given it all up."

"What's she come to this part of the world for anyway? I don't get it. Is she going to teach school over here?"

"What a shabby question! The daughter of Fred Holt! If you would read a missionary magazine now and then, and if you wouldn't sleep through *every* sermon, you would know that missionaries give their lives to this work, to get as many converts as they can, and to try to get them into Heaven. How you could have made this trip with Frances Holt, and not have a better insight into this great cause, is more than I can understand. She just thrills me, and I do wish our tickets read through Korea, so we could make a side trip down into the country where she is to work."

"I can worry along without travelling into any more countries. Do you mean to say she's going to *live* over here for the rest of her life?"

"I certainly do. If you could have given up

bridge for just one evening,—that last evening on the boat to listen to her tell of the romance of this missionary life, and the inspiration of it and—and—I can't tell all that she said, but it was fascinating to hear her. But she believes that God is a real Presence and that He asked her to go to Korea and that He is with her. And she can quote verses in the Bible that you didn't know were there, and that make your heart flutter and your feet get cold because you feel it's all true and He might punish you terribly for not going as a missionary too, and you feel so little and insignificant, and scared too. And it's fascinating to feel the cold chills go all over you, and when I get home I'm going to speak on missions more, and urge church members to give more money and work up more enthusiasm for the cause."

IV

KOREA

THAT day Frances Holt travelled through Wonderland. The coaches of the fussy little train were set so low that the ride through the close-set villages had all the charm and intimacy of motoring. There were no barbed-wire fences bounding the right of way,—and she could almost touch the hedges bordering the gardens of the charming little country houses crowding well up to the railway.

Bamboo, pines, and thickets of camelia and magnolia fringed the foreground. There were orange and lemon trees upon sunny uplands, and rice fields in green patches reaching back into the irregular valleys,—balsam, cryptomeria and fern rioted over the highlands. At the foot of the hills, or sometimes laid out in long lines, parallel with the track, nestled the villages—snug, neat and friendly little homes,—built of pine and paper; set among the greenery. The streets of these villages were lined with gay booths,—all hung with paper lanterns,—displaying their wares with irresistible attraction. Barley candy, ami, rolls of sugary bean cakes stacked in delectable rows, lured the passer-by. And every form in the known world that can

be stamped out of ivory and red celluloid dangled from the walls and ceilings of these bazaars in gayest ornamentation.

To Frances came a keen delight in watching the young girls of these play-towns, as they hobbled along in their tight skirts, crossing the mats of a tea house or tripping down the street in their wooden clogs with a grace of special movement—a delicate strange play of folds and feet—"something between the pacing of fan-tail pigeons, and the musical gait of Greek maidens on the friezes of the Parthenon!"

Further on, where the way swung to the coast of the inland sea, miniature waves lapped lazily about green rocks,—and crooked pines threw grotesque shadows into the haze over the water. Phantom islands swinging into mid air, or floating in vapour screened the view to the ocean. The silvery light of the atmosphere and the melody of sky and sea and misty isles stirred her like music. She leaned her head against the window and responded deeply to the beauty about her. Twilight came, and in its enchantment memories of the trivial and exhausting activities that had made up life on the ship fell from her, and day-dreams and visions that had languished in the company of restless and chattering globe trotters returned. She was in tune with the Infinite. The Master had never seemed so near. The glory of entrance

into His service thrilled her anew. Words came to her that seemed spoken aloud. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man the things that God hath prepared for them that love Him." She gave over to delicious reverie and review of the impulses that had brought her to this far country.

The sun had set in a riotous blaze and the lights of the villages scintillated through the gathering darkness, when the engine of the Lilliputian Limited pulled into the last station—Shimonoseki. From here all passengers for Korea were to board a night boat, crossing the Japan straits to Fusan.

As she stepped to the platform of the station, a crowd of courteous officials and boys in red-caps—who seemed to be awaiting her arrival—regulated her every step until she was safely aboard the *Kiowa Maru*. She stood a while at the rail, under the bright lights of the deck, to watch the unending line of humans filling up the gangway, and moving along to the third class quarters,—amidships. Many she recognized as individuals, for they had stood out in the crowd that had boarded the train with her in Kobe. The little gray women with the dangling babies,—looking now for a place in which to lie down and sleep; the travellers in the kimonos with gay obis, and flowing sleeves—their wonderful headdresses now a bit roughened and unkempt—these were hurrying to find their

places on the mats, where they would kneel down in an excruciating position, sip tea, fold up their belongings in exact tidiness, put a block of wood under their heads, and relax to rest for the night, under the bright lights of the room.

She turned to look at the ship's flag fluttering at the stern, and smiled at the queer sensation its folds of red and white gave her, and at her lack of enthusiasm over it. A very obvious young man in a new suit of very fresh gray, stepped to her side. This suit had been cut after an American pattern, doubtless, but had inventive touches of arbitrary darts that gave it a style peculiarly Oriental. The padded coat set well away from his narrow chest, and anyone could see that it would have set quite as well without the chest. His trousers fitted as only trousers can fit over legs that double under and cross so easily when the wearer sits upon the floor.

"Do you speak English, sir?" he inquired.

"American," replied Frances.

"I am a student in the Higher Commercial School of Osaka, and I want to converse."

"About what?" Frances inquired.

"About America. I want to go to America to study to become a Doctor of Philosophy."

"Is that what this country needs?"

"Yes, I am a student of Karl Marx, too, and I think many thoughts."

"How do you pronounce S-h-i-m-o-n-o-s-e-k-i?" asked Frances.

"Oh, that is easy. It sounds like you spell it. Do you labour at missions?"

"I—I suppose that is what you might call it. I am going to Korea to teach the Bible."

"You are very kind, sir, and some day I hope that you may teach me English; my father is officer of police station, and we live at upper room in villa where the birds fly in and out of our head every morning. It is very joyful occupation. So long."

"Now that," said Frances to herself, "is the 'rising tide' in the Orient." She moved toward the door leading to the cabins, and then paused. Her attention had been caught by groups of another people who were now mingling with the throngs of Japanese—a people dressed conspicuously, in clothes of white cambric.

She had known she would meet them soon,—had looked for them with increasing eagerness as she neared their country, but she was startled now at the instant thrill of recognition that held her. They were a people of olive skin, of black hair and eyes, shaded by lids with the peculiar fullness over the line of the cheek—of noses with broad nostrils and no bridges—but they were a race taller, straighter and more graceful than the Japanese. They were Koreans. There were women

of high degree in linen of transparent daintiness, wearing tight little caps of black satin over their smooth hair. The men were strikingly dressed in coats, trousers and overcoats of white cotton cloth that was glistening in its purity. One handsome young fellow, tall, lithe and splendidly built, sauntered down the deck in careless grace; with every step the white lights of his costume shone through the shadows like luminous marble. Frances had once seen a fall of snow in New York City,—the beauty of this man's costume was like that. In time the snow of the city had been polluted by the filth and smudge of everyday living,—and this dress in the ordinary course of travel would be soiled and stained too,—but at this moment its wearer was a snow man—a white statue—a Korean.

Behind him walked in stately dignity, a man in sack-cloth, a coarse, stiff, yellow hempen weave, that told the world he was a mourner. A rope, also of hemp, tied his robe at the waist, and on his head was an inverted basket of bamboo splits, cleverly woven, and so large that his eyes were not visible to passers-by. He was a man of a past generation of Koreans.

In sharp contrast with this traveller, two school-girls in jaunty independence, chattering excitedly over the events of the voyage, passed the place where Frances stood. They wore short, black

skirts, little white cambric jackets, fastened with one button at the right side,—long white stockings and rubber shoes; heavy braids of hair as glossy as a blackbird's wing, decorated with streamers of stiff red silk, hung down their backs. They were the girls of a new Korea,—so new that none of the magazines or books that Frances had read had described them.

Then came dozens of women in middle age, wearing dresses of white cambric that had been starched and laundered,—(had been spotless, probably, when the journey was young, but which were now crumpled and soiled) moving along with the crowd. Their skirts were bunchy and ill-fitting in make—crushed in the wearing, and seemed never to have been pulled down. Hanging about their ankles were long lengths of modest but unsightly underwear,—spattered with the grime of the streets. It was a costume shapeless and ungainly.

These women were the women of the country districts—farmers' wives and peasants. They were the women she was to work among. She had thought of them often, had read of them, and tried to imagine their ways and appearance. But she was unprepared to find them burden-bearers—awkward, toil-worn,—many of them with huge bundles upon their heads, and babies tied to their backs.

She drew a deep breath. Revulsion? Was that coming to her? Was she to feel that she had thrown her life away in an impossible undertaking—the endeavour to teach women like these before her, the truths of the Bible,—to get over to their untrained minds the religion that thrilled in her own heart? Was it possible to open up natures as dark as theirs to the things of the spiritual? Was it all sentimental moonshine,—a hoax—this mission of hers? She walked to the further side of the boat, now in motion, and looked up at the darkening sky where the familiar stars were being called out. The galaxy of the Pleiades twinkled there, and they always helped her think. The sensations that were thronging her!

“My women’s faces are lined and seamed, and their black eyes are hopeless. What frumps they are in their clothes.”

She threw her arms along the rail and looked at the black water breaking into silvery edges where white caps folded back from the shore.

“Am I going to be affected by things like this? Why can’t I look at the heart, as God does, and not at the outside appearance! Oh, it isn’t, it isn’t that. It’s just,—am I going to love them? I’ve got to if I am going to work among them, and I’m not sure I can. They look so different from what I expected.”

There was a step behind her and she turned to

face an odd little figure in a linen duster and a pith helmet.

"I'm Miss Caraway, Amy Caraway. I've come to welcome you to Korea. When we reach Fusan you are to go with me cross country to Sen Chun. You'll hit the real thing on that trip, —living in Korean houses. Think you can sit and sleep on a stone floor? You don't look like a missionary, but you never can tell. Some of the likeliest theologues just from the Seminary find the foreign missionary plow handles too long, or too short, or too rough, and they look back, and go back, too. But some way I believe you are going to weather it, and make a real missionary.

"Honey, don't mind me. I always have to cry a little when I see a lovely young girl like you come out here to this hard, trying, blessed life. The only time I feel all warmed up, and want to question the Almighty is when He permits such a sacrifice, right before my eyes. I know what you are up against—you have been looking at the Korean women going down into the steerage, and they don't fit into your ideal, and you are wondering if you ever will be able to get over to them all the fine things you know; and maybe the devil is telling you that this whole thing is a failure. Well, it isn't. Just take that from one who has been at it for twenty years.

"But here I stand talking to you, when you

should be asleep in your cabin. I am going down into second class. Dry your eyes and forget all about the Koreans. You'll get another impression of them later, and some day you will learn that these women can teach you a lot of things that you don't know about life. Now go to sleep and remember that 'The voice that rolls the stars along, speaks all the promises.' Good night."

Sleep was impossible to Frances that night. She could not close her eyes in the excitement of nearing the land that was to be her future home. The air of the cabin was close and sultry, and from the window she could see, in the half light of the stars, the black water of the sea shining with the glint and sheen of steel. She put on her clothes quickly, and slipped to the deck. A delicious reaction and joy of living came at the rush of salt air, and the swish of spray dashing high, to break into showers of crystals and diamonds that cut her face and drenched her hair. She looked away to the west where the girl in the moon paled before the rising sun. Was Korea to be as beautiful as Japan? She wanted it to be. In the hazy light of the dawn, green headlands and shadowy valleys were shaping slowly into form, and pine groves, second growth thickets, and rice fields were coming out of the mists. Against a background of hills were silhouetted the outlines of low stone huts, thatched with weather-worn straw, and sur-

rounded, every one of them by stone walls, brush fences, reed basketry, and fences of woven bamboo.

This was Korea. Frances wanted to stay to watch the tiny villages shaping through the morning mists, but five little Japanese sailors, with rolled up trousers and bare feet, carrying mops and broom, were preparing to scrub the deck,—and she hurried past them back to the saloon.

Miss Caraway was already there, facing—across a narrow table—the Japanese passport officer.

“Good morning, my dear. I’m going through this passport catechism for both of us, and explaining that neither of us have husbands. Go on to that door to the left and you will find the dining room. I’ll follow in a minute.”

Frances found herself in a charming little breakfast room where the table decorations were miniature gardens. Tiny vines climbed over pebbles, mossy banks were spanned by bridges two inches long, and pine trees six inches high grew from crevices in the stones.

Miss Caraway bustled in, sat down at the table, opened her Bible and read a Psalm, then indicated that Frances was to say grace.

“Isn’t this luxury! When we leave Fusan and strike into the country we shall have to eat what we can forage, and this is our last chance to put our feet under a real table until we reach Sen Chun. Your bob is lovely, and what a pretty dress

you are wearing. I know I am going to love you. What are the latest street songs in America? I came out to Korea to the tune of 'Little Annie Rooney.' You never heard it, probably. Isn't this grape fruit delicious? When I came to Korea we crossed the straits in a coast steamer that had nothing but third class, and we didn't land at Fusan, we went on around to Mokpo, and those three days were tortures. This line of steamers between Shimonoseki and Fusan is the best ferry line in the world, and aren't the Japanese red-caps and railway officials efficient? They know how to obey orders. Japanese travellers have learned to eat soft fried eggs too, and life is so much more agreeable than it once was. Will you have rolls and coffee? Did you ever dream you would taste butter like this in the Orient? What do I eat when I am itinerating? Don't let's talk about that until we come to it. It's time to get off the boat now, and here is where we take the train for Masan a little way up country. Don't judge any of the Koreans you see about you until you know them better. They are the most lovable race in the world, and make the poorest impression upon travellers. The life you are coming to is the happiest ever."

Frances almost ran down the gangway of the steamer. It was good to feel the ground of Korea under her feet. She danced a few steps and would

have thrown her arms around the little chatterbox at her side, if they had been alone. Twenty years of service! Sensations, impressions, revulsions, all, vanished before the experience, the exact knowledge and faith of this veteran. Frances was glad to the ends of her fingers that she was to begin her life in Korea with Amy Caraway as guide.

At Masan, Ilwonie, Miss Caraway's "boy" was awaiting their arrival. He was in the car before the train stopped, and with a polite flourish and bow to the stranger from America, and an awkward smile of welcome into Miss Caraway's eyes, he seized their baggage and hustled it to the platform before a red-cap appeared. No time was lost in talking over the arrangements for the overland trip. Ilwonie had attended to them all. He was shouldering a way through the gathering crowd now, and beyond the station gates eased the heavy suitcases from his back to the "jickey" (the luggage carrier of a coolie).

Eight other coolies, wearing tiny black felt hats, with red tassels, stood before two gaily ornamented sedan chairs, built like wooden boxes. Long poles were tied to these chairs, and as the American women sat down in them, feet curled under in native fashion, the coolies raised to their shoulders the harness attached to the poles, and the chairs swung free of the ground. These little

conveyances were open in front, but were hung with a curtain that might be drawn when the rider was once inside.

"Don't pretend you're comfortable with your feet under you. It's far less excruciating to sit with your feet thrust to one side. We shall ride this way for twenty miles."

"Miss Caraway, you know I'll never do it. I shall walk first."

"All right, but stay in the chair while we are on the level ground; we'll reach the mountain soon. Walk then."

The sensation to Frances of being lifted in the air and swung from poles that were pressing hard into red human flesh, was a disagreeable one, and in a very little time she jumped to the ground, to walk by the roadside.

The homes of the farmers were her first study. Built of poles cut from pine trees and latticed with bamboo splits, plastered with mud, and buttressed with stone walls. These were the common run of homes, comfortable to those who could sit on the floor.

Set back from the highway were houses of brick with tiled roofs and pretentious grounds, surrounded by shrubbery and flowers, and shut in by stone walls. Further on a tablet house, a truly Oriental structure, caught her attention. It was about 15 x 15 feet in size, and perhaps ten feet

high. Four huge tree trunks, barbed and unplanned, cracked and weather-worn, supporting a tile roof—this was its simple construction. The roof was most picturesque, for the rafters swept over the eaves in a long thrust that curved high to throw into relief the dragon gargoyles spitting at the sky.

There were no walls, but a paling of sharp pickets of wood spanned the distance between the corner pillars. Some Government official of long ago, to record his worthy deeds and to keep his memory green, had ordered its construction. It was not a mausoleum, for it marked no grave site. In the exact centre of the enclosure was a granite slab, topped with a granite dragon. Upon this stone had been carved in the intricate and curious Chinese characters, the name, address and virtues of the deceased. Hung from the lintels just under the eaves, were beautifully written and framed testimonials as to the character and general worthiness of other members of the family, and of his ancestors of several generations back.

Miss Caraway's coolies had been swinging along at the pace of the foreign woman ahead. As they came abreast of her now, standing before this tablet house, they were quite willing to ease the chair from their aching shoulders and set it down by the roadside, while they talked and pulled grasses through their teeth. The coolies belonging to Frances' chair had scattered, to follow

the course of a brook that ran from the mountains to spill and splash among the rice fields. They were returning now with a basket of wild raspberries to present to her. The berries they had found growing by the waterside, and had woven the basket from the grasses at hand.

Frances accepted the gift as graciously as it had been offered.

"Miss Caraway, do we have to get anywhere to-day? Can't we sit down here in this delicious sunshine, with these wild flowers about, and take off our shoes and stockings, and wade? This journey is just a frolic for me."

"We'll do that some day; but if we do not push on now we shall not reach Naju by nightfall, and we shall have to sleep in a Korean house—and it might be a hut, too, like the ones we have been passing. I am not sure we could find a comfortable place to stay, if we arrived in an unknown village after nightfall. A night in a native house, without cots and bedding, means a night without sleep, and if I guess right, you did not sleep last night. Keeping fit on these trips and ready for the work ahead is my job."

"But please, Miss Caraway, it's luncheon time, and let's unpack our baskets and have a picnic, here where the ampelopsis grows over these great rocks, and the bluebells and daisies are looking up at us. I want you to tell me about Ilwonie."

She was a very charming figure as she sat there with her hat off—a soft wind lifting the short curls and blowing little wisps over her flushed cheeks.

All that morning Amy Caraway had been trying to bring her will into subjection,—to adjust her outraged feelings of the fitness of things, and to see things as God saw them, something she could never quite attain. Ever since she had set her eyes upon Frances Holt she had been in a belligerent mood with the Almighty. Why had a lovely girl like this been sent out here to work in the country? She believed in consecration, of course, she did—but it was such sheer waste that Frances Holt should spend her life among these village folk who could never appreciate her. Why had she not been assigned to work in the schools of the Mission?

Well, never mind, this girl wanted her to sit down now and enjoy with her the sweetness of the flowers and the noise of the little brook. She would do it, though her program for the trip would be upset, and whether they would reach Naju that night, she did not know!

Frances unpacked the lunch box, and exclaimed in delight over her discoveries. "Beaten biscuit! I never imagined setting my teeth in one again. And ginger snaps! These are simply delicious, but, oh, they are choking me." She dropped the

biscuits and turned quickly to walk up the banks of the brook.

Amy Caraway put the food back in the basket and replaced it on the poles of her chair. Her wise little head nodded in deep sympathy.

"I know; they used to make them in the kitchen of the home she left. Nearly always it's the wild flowers out here—lilies of the valley, violets, buttercups and iris that bring up memories and make your throat ache, but food will do it too. Oh, what that poor child must go through in this strange country."

She walked to the ancestral tablet house and stood looking at the characters engraved on the ancient slab.

Frances joined her in a short time. "Miss Amy, see what I have found up there in the glen. The eyes of my wild looking coolies almost popped from their heads when I pulled them out of the tree." She was holding up three little bags of cloth, filled with rice and tied with gay threads. Frances had found them hanging from the branches of a low tree.

"No wonder. These are offerings for the spirits, and perhaps a leper put them there. But that isn't what horrified the coolies. They saw thousands of demons jumping out of the air, to take revenge upon you for your impiety."

Frances dropped the bags. "Poinsettia believes

in things like that. If she were here you would never get her away from this tablet house. She believes in dragons, too, only she calls them crocky-diles. Poinsettia was the cook, you know."

"I guessed as much, dear. It would please those coolies if you were to eat the raspberries they gathered for you, and then we must get into the chairs and hurry on. If we do not reach Naju by nightfall, we'll have nothing to sleep on but a hot Korean floor, and you are not quite ready for that."

V

HER INITIATION

THE journey was resumed. The path was wet, and footing uncertain. In many places it was not over a foot wide. To make time the bearers left the main highway to follow a short cut running along the borders of the rice fields,—now filled with water.

Frances fell to studying her coolies. They were agile and quick as chamois, and it was their footwear that interested her most. Their sandals were of straw twine, as tough as cartilage, twisted and woven and tied into pads for soles that held close to the heel and prevented slipping. It was a crude and a very primitive shoe, but effective. Their trousers and short jackets were made of muslin that had been snowy white that morning.

Where the path turned from the rice fields to the higher ground of the hills, Frances wanted again to walk, but Miss Caraway insisted that she ride.

As the way grew steeper the coolies took up a native melody, chanting the difficulty of the road, and the ache of their shoulders. The man ahead, in a high falsetto, quavered a complaint that was answered in chorus, as his companions told of the

gall and fret of their burden, and the dolour of their hearts.

Twilight was gathering rapidly among the pine groves, and Miss Caraway, as well as the coolies, knew now that it was impossible to reach Naju that night.

"Lower the chairs," she said. "We shall not sleep at Naju to-night. Is there a near-by Korean house where we can find shelter and a room to ourselves?"

"It is impossible, Pueen," said the head coolie, pulling his topknot in perplexity. "There is no Korean man who could live in this forest. There are goblins everywhere. We shall all die this night."

"All die this night," wailed the seven other coolies.

"Stop that noise, and listen to me. There is a small Buddhist temple among these mountains, and a priest,—a hermit, lives there. He can be reached, can he not?"

"True words, but it's miles from here and what man could reach it on a night like this? We cannot see. Blackness has eaten the moon."

"Miss Amy, we shall have to camp in the woods to-night."

"We certainly shall not. We have no rugs, and we should be bitten by thousands of mosquitoes and bugs. We are going to push on until we find

shelter of some kind. But first we shall have supper. Anything we undertake to do, can be the better done on the strength of a good meal."

The Koreans brought pine cones and sticks and built a good fire. Miss Caraway had coffee, bacon and a small frying pan in the basket, and delicious odours were soon mingling with the piney air. One of the coolies produced two eggs from the sleeve of his coat, and there were rolls, too, in the bottom of the basket that the steward that morning had given the missionary. The beaten biscuit and the ginger snaps were surreptitiously passed out to the coolies. Their thanks were exclamations and hearty smacks of approval over "foreign food."

"My dear, we are going to have a little prayer together over this supper, and the journey out into the night; then we'll start for the hut."

"Isn't this romantic, Miss Caraway? Do you catch that odour of the balsam, and those burning pine knots? And the damp, woodsy smells, and the night birds settling down with little domestic twitterings? Nothing ever tasted as good as this bacon. Did you ever eat any bacon wrapped around ripe olives and then fried? Oh, it's heavenly. But listen!"

From the rocks above them a wild scream of rage and pain cut the air—a sound that chilled to the bone. There was a moment's stillness,—quick

words among the coolies, a movement through the bushes and a rush and rattle down the slopes.

"The coolies have gone. It's a tiger," whispered Miss Caraway.

"Have they left us just for that?" exclaimed Frances. "The tiger is miles away by this time."

"The coolies will be too, shortly. They might have faced a gun, but a tiger, never. We shall have to climb without help, now. We'll put our belongings in the basket, and leave it with the chairs, here. Let's try to reach the hermit's hut by midnight. We have only one box of matches and no lantern."

"Oh, for my flash! It's in my suitcase!"

"Just so," said Miss Caraway. "Make long lists of things indispensable on an itinerating trip, if you want to, but they will always be somewhere else when you need them. I know how to make a pine torch and I'll go ahead, you will follow closely. When the torch burns out we'll stop and make a fresh one, and if we don't reach the hut by two o'clock we'll climb a hillock and wait till sun up."

In the flaring light of the pine knot they began the ascent. The path was steep and soon led away from the forest to a huddle of rocks, flung from the upper heights in some mighty upheaval, when the world was young. By day the trodden grasses and roots and the edges of the rocks worn smooth

by sandalled feet would have told of the way, but in the uncertain flicker of the torch the two women stumbled over a waste, uncertain and almost untraceable. Hours passed—the ascent grew more difficult. A jagged boulder lay over the path.

“Why can’t we detour and go around it?” asked Frances. “What’s the use of wearing ourselves to a bone going over it?”

Miss Caraway inspected the markings of the path.

“I don’t know, but it’s very plain that the coolies always have gone over it, and it would be dangerous to go our own way now. We haven’t much of a light, but I think I can make it by holding to these vines.”

Frances climbed the boulder easily, and from the top reached down to grasp the hand of the older woman to help her up.

“It must be great to be young and grasshoppery. Thank you, dear; that is a big help.”

“Tennis and swimming, you know.”

Miss Caraway sat down to rest.

“Right now I feel like a rag doll that has been dragged under the fence and left out in the dew overnight.”

“Oh, you’re delicious! This is so much more thrilling than a blow-out or a loose piston. You see, I’ve been in training for this when I’ve spent whole days under our car. But I don’t quite un-

derstand how we are to reach that hut before day-break. Let me help you down this rock."

"No, take the torch. I'm going alone." Miss Caraway grasped the tough vine in one hand and began the descent, cautiously, making her way from one uneven projection to a lower one. She had miscalculated the strength of the vine. It slipped, snapped, and she fell heavily among the underbrush. There was a low moan, then she lay quiet. Frances was at her side in an instant.

"Miss Amy, are you hurt?"

No answer.

"Oh, you are lying in a pool of water! Do you hear me? Can you move?"

Miss Caraway turned her head slowly.

"My arm," she said faintly.

Frances grasped her shoulders and helped her to her knees. "I cannot stand," whispered Miss Caraway. "Just wait a minute till this faintness leaves me. Oh, look at my hand; it's swelling and I cannot move it. It's useless."

Frances' voice trembled as she leaned over the older woman. "I'm sorry, but we must pull out of this bog. Put your other arm around my neck. Now stand,—steady, don't hurry, be sure of the ground under your feet. Watch your step—a last pull, now there, that's over! I wish I could shake myself like a dog and be dry, don't you? Sit down on this stump; I'm going to examine your arm."

The girl ran her steady fingers along the injured arm, grasped the wrist firmly and gave a strong, quick jerk. Miss Caraway leaned against her heavily, and Frances wondered if she was going to faint. In a little while Miss Caraway spoke.

"Broken, isn't it?"

"Yes, just above the wrist, one bone only, and I snapped it back. I think it's all right until we can get to Sen Chun and the doctor there. I'm going to bind it now. One of these bushes around here ought to give me a splint, and with one of my stockings (maybe it will take both of them) I can strap it up good and tight."

The girl was quick in her movements, and the arm was bandaged in a very short time. The stems of the long, tough cheek-vine were everywhere on the mountainside. Frances cut one of them, pulled the leaves off, and made an excellent sling. The operation was complete.

"There, doesn't that feel better? Do you think we can push on now? We are both soaked to the skin, and that temple cannot be far from here."

"Don't you see what else has happened to me? My glasses are broken and I'm as blind as a kitten. I can't see one foot of the path ahead."

"And the torch is out. There is only one thing to do, you will have to stay here while I go in search of the hermit. Every bush about this place is wet, and there are no pine trees. Even if we

could find the sticks I suppose it would be dangerous to build a fire, this high on the mountain; it might attract the tiger. The starlight is brighter now. I can trace the trail. Tell me, is the temple at the side of the road, or do I detour? And where?"

"I can't let you go alone, child."

"But you can't go with me in this darkness. I know you are suffering, but you will not say so. Another fall might make you helpless for life. It's me for the hermit if I can find him."

"You are surely being let in on the ground floor of missionary experiences. What an initiation! But you are playing up to it all right."

"I've simply *got* to make good in this work, Miss Caraway, or father will come out here and take me home. 'The Lord mighty in battle' sent me here, and I just love this adventure because I'm ashamed of the way those beaten biscuits affected me, and I want to prove that I'm fit to be a missionary. Now, please tell me at once how to reach the temple."

"About a mile up this trail are the ruins of a Buddhist monastery. Turn to the right, there, and go down the mountain a short distance until you hear a waterfall. Crawl through the bushes and over the rocks and you will reach a stream. Follow its course until you come to a gate. It is never locked. If a priest or his acolyte does not

meet you in the courtyard, walk to the middle door of the temple and strike the drum at the entrance."

"I'll do it. Good-bye, dear, keep quiet and maybe the tiger won't get you."

Frances divided her box of matches with Miss Caraway, then found the trail, and started up the steep grade. There the line of way left the jagged rocks, and ran through the heavy grasses of the uplands. She mounted easily, but further on where huge boulders lay overthrown and half buried in the silt and wash of torrential rains, climbing was very difficult. Scraggy bushes cut her hands and bare legs. Half buried stones, wet and lichen covered, slipped under her tread, and she was thrown to her knees. A while she lay there to gain courage for the climb ahead.

"There are little puffs of star dust all over the face of the Pleiades. They are a bit more hazy than when I started. Perhaps I'm not seeing straight. How am I to get to the temple if I don't shake the dew from my hair, rub my eyes and start?"

Once more she was climbing. Frances never knew how she made the last mile of the ascent before reaching the ruins of the monastery. A sharp pain between the eyes blinded her, and the roar of the seas was in her ears. A part of the way she crawled upon her knees,—groping among the brambles that tore her dress to tatters. After

hours of this slow progress, suddenly there towered before her a wall of laid up rocks, silhouetted against the sky and the Milky Way. Human hand had laid them there. This was no earthquake jumble. She threw her weight against the stones, pressed her cheek to their wet mosses, and ran her fingers over the rough surfaces to feel their order, —rows and rows of them. Men had once lived and endeavoured in this wilderness. Someone had gone this way before. As she took up the trail again the long grasses seemed less tightly tangled and the jungle of the undergrowth less dense.

Below the waterfall a stream had torn a path through the brush in its haste to gain the rice fields of the valley below. She waded at once to the centre, and began to scramble down its right of way. The rush of the water and the peril of its rapids would have been glorious excitement in the day when she could have played with its hazards, but it was unfair that she should be thrown against the jagged rocks and into treacherous basins and hollows in the blackness of the night.

Her step was uncertain and her strength exhausted when she reached the shelter of a little backwash, clear of the great boulders. Before her, away from the stream, two rude pillars and a gate took shape in the darkness. She had reached the retreat of the hermit priest. She threw her weight

against the gate,—it swung back, and she entered. Utterly spent, she reached the door of the temple and pulled at the great iron ring. As the door swung out Frances dropped unconscious on the threshold.

A tiger's scream cut the silence of the night.

* * * * *

In the chill breeze before the dawn, the brass bells hanging from the eaves of the temple vibrated in measured rhythm, and their ringing called up the orioles.

The clamour of the bells and the birds awakened the girl. Her eyes opened slowly. In the growing light they searched the shadows of the temple, and stared straight into the slumbrous eyes of a great gold Buddha. His composure and placidity held her. Soon, streaks of dawn, pink, rose and cerise, shot the shades behind the Buddha, and touched to life the greens of the great emerald in his forehead. From somewhere on the mountain-side came the beating of a drum, marking the rhythm of the bells. What wonderland was about her? Was it a dream? She closed her eyes, again to feel its magic and mystery.

What was that?

Through the witchery of the morning came a snarl, a roar of pain, and a hideous rattle. Frances arose to her knees. Where was she? What

had happened to her? Every nerve and muscle smarted; a sharp spasm of pain drew her shoulders. She was fully awake now, unafraid to meet a tragedy,—but resenting the violation of the loveliness of the day.

A few feet from the bamboo gate a tawny beast, in the throes of a last agony, curved his graceful neck under his own sheltering paw, and bit the gravel. A convulsion shook the great frame, and it relaxed in death. Was he the tiger whose screams had terrified the coolies the evening before? And how had he come here?

She turned. The heavy curtain hanging beneath the platform where sat the great Buddha, was in motion. A hand pushed it aside, and a boy's face peered into the light. At the sight of Frances the eyes widened; it was a gaze absorbed and startled. The hand was withdrawn and from behind the curtain came excited whisperings. Then another face looked out into the twilight of the morning, to survey and marvel. One eye in this face was a withered hollow.

Frances waited. Out of the confusion of sensations she reasoned. The man of one eye was the priest. She could not talk to him, and yet he must go with her to Miss Caraway. Who was the boy? Something about his thick upper lip, too full to close over the white projecting teeth, was familiar.

Was he Ilwonie?

She had seen Miss Caraway's "boy" only once, and he was now in Naju. Why were these two in hiding? And who had shot the tiger?

Somewhere from the valley sounded a long wail, —a woman's voice chanting a lament.

"Eigo-o-o, Eigo-o-o," again it echoed through the hills, and other voices joined in the fret of it.

"It's a dirge," whispered Frances.

Things began happening. A tall Korean in Japanese clothes stole through the gate of the temple, skulked along the wall, and ran to where the tiger lay. Drawing a long knife from his sleeve he cut the paws from the carcass. The wailing drew nearer,—the man sprang up in confusion, thrusting the bloody paws into his girdle and wiping the knife as he ran. He darted into the rear of the temple and vaulted over the low walls.

Frances heard the crunch of falling earth and the snapping of branches in the upper ravine. There was a rush from under the Buddha, and the priest and the boy pushed past Frances and into the yard. Two Japanese hunters with rifles over their shoulders entered the gate at this moment and in fury examined the mutilated carcass. One of them leaped at the priest, shaking a fist in his face. The other opened a small case knife, slashed the jugular vein in the tiger's neck, and caught his blood in a black bottle.

The boy's eyes flashed. In defense of the priest

he struck down the hunter's fist. Meanly, cruelly, the Japanese turned to him. Frances could endure the situation not another moment. She had seen it all. She ran into the yard to face the hunter. In a torrent of English she told what had taken place, of the tall man and his knife, of his cunning and fear, of the cutting off of the tiger's paws, and of his escape. Then she stopped. She was confused at the amazedness in the faces of the men. She was getting nothing over to them. The American tongue—the language of her great country, was useless here. Four Orientals stood in astonishment. The sight of her, an American woman in a Buddhist temple grounds, and at this hour! Bare-legged and ragged, too, she was.

Where had she come from?

The man of the black bottle wiped the grewsome stains from his hands, and sucked his breath in the national exclamation, *So-dis-ka!* The other hunter dropped his fist and bowed obsequiously. The priest gave a command to the boy. In a moment he had brought a cushion from the Buddha's store, and the American woman was asked to be seated. Frances accepted the homage and hospitality with a gracious gesture, wondering the while if it were offered to her as a woman or as an American.

How helpless she was! How was she ever to get over to these men that one of them must go

with her down the mountainside to help Miss Caraway. She looked at them. The hunters were rough and the mountainside lonely. The priest was moving toward the little temple, probably to begin the ritual of the morning worship. There was only the boy. Should she take his hand and drag him after her down the trail? Listen! The funeral dirge was coming nearer.

"Eigo-o-o, Eigo-o-o." Someone had paused outside the enclosure. The gate swung back on creaking hinges and a woman, dishevelled and old, her hair hanging about her shoulders, hurried through the opening. At the sight of the tiger she crouched, threw her skirt over her head, and began again the long, low lament, "Eigo-o-o, Eigo-o-o."

Two men bearing a rude stretcher entered the enclosure. They passed before the prostrate woman, and glanced curiously at the American. The mourner waved them back, petulantly. Awed by her vehemence and the presence of the foreigner, they worked silently toward the temple, and set down their burden before the great Buddha.

The priest laid down the hollow wooden ball he had been beating and threw back the cloth covering the white object on the stretcher. A child's form lay there—quiet. Her hair was set and matted, and there were blood stains on her dress. The priest threw up the lid of a brass-bound chest and

brought out a beautiful linen cloth. He threw it over the little body, then went back to his prayers.

As the bier passed, the woman arose excitedly. The lines in her wrinkled old face were crossed and knotted in elfine ugliness. She fell upon the tiger's body, beating and tearing the long fur with her hands. She stamped upon the head and ran her hand into the lolling mouth and over the gleaming teeth. She was a fury in the venom of her hate. It needed no interpreter to understand the pantomime—a tragedy. Frances knew that the tiger had killed the child.

She went to where the men stood, looking down at the quiet form. She wanted to put a little blue flower in the waxen hand, but the bearers were too quick for her. One of them thrust her back. She glanced down at her disordered dress and her own bare legs, then understood their caution. She looked like a witch to them.

A feeling of utter helplessness mastered her. She was getting nowhere about aid for Miss Caraway. How could she ever make these men understand that she wanted one of them to go with her down the mountainside—back over the way she had come that night. Would she have to go alone?

Someone was coming through the gate—a man in uniform! Blue eyes he had, big round ones that smiled recognition at her. A nose too that was aquiline and straight, and blond hair! From the

other side of the world—her world—he was, surely.

“You’re the best looking thing I ever saw, English, aren’t you?” she exclaimed.

“Svedish.”

“I should have known it! You look like Gustavus Adolphus or a crowned head of some kind!”

“Vell, I can brove an alibi to dot! No ground heads is belonged to de Salvation Army. But you! Vy is you de lady or de tiger? Vot is dis all about?”

“Oh, how I have wanted to talk to someone who could understand me! This is a tragedy before us, and there is another one down the mountainside. Won’t you go with me at once to find Miss Caraway, Miss Amy Caraway, she’s hurt. Her arm’s broken and she’s now beyond that old monastery, on the other side of the mountain.”

“Miss Caraway! Vy, she is my goot friend. And she is hurt?”

“Yes.”

“I vill go, but you stay here. You are not fit to travel now.”

“I know I look a fright, and these Korean men think I am a witch, but you can never find Miss Caraway without me. She fell last night when we were coming up the trail, and her arm is broken. Her glasses were smashed too, and she could not follow the path. She is there now.”

"Just so! And it is like dot! Vell all of dis mountain do I know, and I shall to her rescue now."

Frances clasped her hands tightly. She was determined that the man should see nothing of the deadly funk that possessed her. She urged his instant departure, but as he disappeared through the gate she sank exhausted. Every nerve in her body ached, and she was famished. A strong odour of burning straw,—of the cooking of peculiar foods, and over all the suffocating stench of the body of the mutilated tiger on the warm air, brought to her a horrible feeling of nausea and loathing. One of the hunters opened a long knife and sharpened it upon a file.

Frances arose unsteadily; the situation was unbearable, and she knew she must reach the clear air. The temple boy ran to the gate and threw it back for her, and as she passed a curious little smile of sympathy played between them.

Outside, she paused to breathe the wine of the morning and to feel in its buoyancy and freshness a sense of escape from the bewilderment of the night. In its tonic her pulses quickened and the flush and vigour of her healthy young being came back.

Making her way to the stream, and wading its pebbly margin to a sheltered clearing among the balsams and azaleas, she drew her shoes from her

swollen feet and slipped into a pool by the rocks that had hurt her so cruelly in the night. It was glorious now to splash among them and to feel the cold water drawing the pain and weariness from her arms and back.

A slight movement among the bushes startled her, and a long arm thrust out from the greenery laid something white on the farthest bank. Could it be a gift of clean clothes? The smile in the eyes of the temple acolyte said as much.

She picked up the quaint linen garments. There were trousers, short jacket and long outer coat of a Korean boy. She had studied the costume the night before on the boat. Her ragged and soiled dress was drawn off in an instant, and she laughed aloud as she put on the boy's suit and thought about what Aunt Emily would say if she could see her. The touch of the soft linen and its whiteness was restful and in abandon she relaxed to the mosses and pine needles of the water-side.

After a time the azaleas stirred again, but she was not startled, for she was half expecting him. The bright eyes of the boy danced with delight as he looked at her, and he almost dropped the tray of food he was carrying.

Frances arose and turned around slowly to display the full effect of her new costume, and to enjoy the novelty of the moment.

The boy's admiration exploded in a volley of na-

tive words that needed no interpreter. In excitement he stepped back, put the tray upon the ground, then taking a bowl of steaming rice in both hands, he kneeled before her and presented it to her with all the homage he might have offered royalty. She gave him a radiant look. The courtesy of his attentions had wiped out the memory of the episode at the temple, and she was ready for the fun of the moment.

Frances had never known that rice, boiled and unsalted, could taste so delicious; and her first cup of Oriental tea, without lemon, and unsweetened, was nectar. Her awkward attempts with chop sticks amused them both—the boy replaced them again and again in her fingers before she could master their use. Her laughter and the sound of the American words, which the Korean tried to repeat after her, awakened the silence of the quiet cove and served to guide Miss Caraway to the spot.

“Oh-o-o!” gasped the missionary at the sight of Frances in her white clothes. “I’ve been worried to death about you, and here you are looking prettier than ever in that boy’s costume.”

“Oh, Miss Caraway, you’re here! What a horrible climb you have had. You are faint! Sit down quick in this woodsy place. I have found a boy who gets things for you like Aladdin’s lamp. I am going to dress your arm. Aren’t you glad it

is daylight? And did you hear the chorus of the orioles?"

Miss Amy leaned against a tree for support, then slipped to the ground.

"Don't unbandage it, it's swollen. I'll rest here a while." The Korean boy and Frances brought hot water, and there were tears in his eyes as Frances drew down Miss Caraway's dress and bared the bruised shoulder and arm.

"Where is the Gustavus Adolphus man I sent after you?"

"He is Captain Bernstine. I told him to leave me and go to help the Koreans in the village the tiger wrecked. He will send a man down the mountain to find our chairs and the coolies. We can reach Naju this afternoon."

"That tiger was some tiger, Miss Caraway. He's up in the temple yard now. Please tell me, do they always claw around like that and kill people before they die?"

"Often, when they are wounded."

"There were a lot of things that happened at the temple that I don't understand. Am I putting these packs on too hot?"

"No, you are drawing out the pain, and oh, it feels so good. What should I have done without you, child, on this trip?"

"Miss Caraway, that tiger died before my eyes, and it was horrible,—but other things happened

that were worse. A man crept into the yard before the hunters came, cut off the paws of the tiger, and escaped over the wall. Why did he do it?"

"The paws of the tiger can cure stomach trouble, if you but knew it, and men with T. B. drink his blood, certain of a cure, and they pound his bones into nostrums too. I am sorry you have had this experience at the very beginning of your life out here."

"I'm not, Miss Caraway; put your head down in my lap now and listen to the rush of that little brook; I want to touch your pretty hair and tell you that because a woman cried in agony over her little girl and because the gold Buddha and the priest with his wooden ball had nothing for her,—could give her no hope—I longed with my whole soul right then for the language to tell her about Jesus Christ. Every fibre of my being thrills with the thought that I'm a missionary to Korea for life.

"Last night I was not sure I should love the Koreans,—they did not look as I imagined they would, the costume was ugly, and their homes — Oh, Miss Caraway, you know the squalor of them better than I do. But now I'm theirs forever. Do you suppose it is because I have on their clothes and have eaten their rice?"

VI

ITINERATING

FRANCES HOLT had been in Korea three years. When her letters arrived her father always left his office, went over to the packing room, where behind the shelter of rows and rows of sacked flour he could read them alone. He wanted no one to see that tears always came at the sight of her dear handwriting.

A long letter telling details of her work and her life among the Koreans of the country districts had arrived that day, and lay warm in his inner pocket.

It was after dinner and he and Mrs. Alderman were walking about the garden, planning a new lilac hedge. Poinsettia was busy with the garden hose.

"It is amazing to me that a girl's caprice can hold out against sense all this time. It was fanaticism that took her to Korea, and it's obstinacy that keeps her there,—nothing else."

"Don't you believe it, Emily. You're off, there. She is having the time of her life. There's something in this missionarying that you don't get, and that's beyond me, but it's real all the same."

Fred Holt blew a cloud of fragrant cigar smoke into the evening air, then reached into his inner pocket and drew forth Frances' letter. "Listen to this:

" 'I am in the country, Daddy, in a village among the mountains. Don't worry about me, for I have Samogie, my Korean boy, with me, and he plans my campaigns like a top sergeant. Last night I arrived at this lonesome place riding a pony that was led by a boy who ran at his head. It was quite a performance, for the pony didn't want me on his back, and he didn't want the boy's hand on his bridle, and he didn't want to go up that stony mountain trail. You can well understand that I had no control over him. The saddle was a wooden frame with a heavy cushion thrown over it. I climbed to the shaky elevation of that mount from a handy stump by the roadside. After I had settled myself atop of the pony, he stiffened and straightened his forelegs in protest and it was some time before we could get him under way. Riding a swaying saddle over the bunched cushion, with my feet hanging helplessly in front of me, was some venture. I didn't have the whip hand in any way, and really I wasn't an equestrian—I was just a passenger . . . '

"She hasn't changed much, has she, Emily? I bet she was as gay as a circus rider on top of that pony, and felt like one too. You just know she

misses the car and the joy of stepping on the gas. But she will never tell us so. Gee, what a driver she was and how the old bus used to move out under her control."

"She is taking the most awful risks, Fred, riding around among those wild hill tribes, and practically alone too. What can a boy of fifteen do to protect her? His name even is against him. It is perfectly certain to me that the whole country is overrun with soldiers and brigands and looters. The odds are all against her. Some of these days you will be reading that she has been captured by bandits.

"The Press dispatches of the *Tribune* this morning told all about the sailing from China to Japan, of one of the great Chinese War Lords, Chang or Wu, I forget which one it was. He probably has thousands of retainers to straggle along after him, and Korea lies directly between China and Japan. There is no doubt that a robber or a brigand lies behind every rock and tree of that whole country. I don't see what the other missionaries are thinking of to let her go off that way alone. I am going to write the Board about it."

Fred Holt continued reading: "Samogie wasn't with me when I arrived; he stayed in Punterdone at the foot of the pass to see that my bedding and food were loaded on the backs of coolies and hurried along to reach me here at Turkey Choan—

but he had trouble finding the right kind of men and my load came along the next day. Daddy, I don't want you to ever ride a Korean pony under any circumstances. The sensation would upset you, I know, it is so much like riding a camel. It would get on your nerves. After miles and miles of this travel I felt sure that we must be nearing Turkey Choan and insisted that we pull up at a wayside hut to inquire the shortest way to the village. My horse's guide coughed in a way of salute, and the tiny paper door flew open. An old man looking just like an ogre peered into the darkness, and eight little ogres, closely surrounding him, peered out too. I told them to shut the door immediately, for I feared the foul air pouring out of that room would taint the whole outdoors.

"We took to the road again and after another hour of jogging along, arrived at Turkey Choan. At least we were told by two small boys that this was the name of the town. Every one of these thousands of villages looks exactly like the other one. My arrival was unexpected. The church leader by whom I had sent the announcement of my coming had been taken ill a few days before, and had not thought it necessary to send a substitute. But Korean hospitality is certain, if church leaders aren't. When we arrived by way of a very crooked lane before the enclosure of the church yard, I was met by a woman with the

sweetest face I ever saw. Her welcome was spontaneous and warm; and without waiting for the pony to throw me, I rolled off that fat cushion and plumped down before her.

“ ‘Oh, Pueen, have you come? We have been waiting for you since two moons before this time. You are cold and you have had a long ride. Why are you alone? Where is your boy and your Bible woman? Come into our house instantly.’ ”

“Daddy, that eight by eight by seven feet high room with its warm floor was a luxury to me. I scrambled over the little plank porch, then stooped to enter the door, and sat down upon the warm stones and let little waves of blessed comfort ooze through my nerves and aching muscles. Without a regret I heard the bells upon my pony jingle as his leader ran with him down the crooked little lane that was the village street, and back to Punterdone where I had started from. Then I looked about me to get my bearings and speculate as to the probable size of the family that had so graciously taken me in.

“The furniture of the little room was a chest made of hard wood of a beautiful grain inlaid with bits of shell, and ornamented with brass; on top of it were rolls of bed quilts. On a shelf above the door were some books printed in Chinese, a tiny lamp stood in one corner and near it was a vanity dresser, six inches high, with a mirror and a comb

on top. A bottle that I knew was filled with hair oil, hung upon the wall. A writing table about a foot high stood next the door. I knew I was in the combination bedroom, living room and dining room of the family. In a moment an inner door opened and a little maid with pink cheeks, and dimples, and eyes as black as a Florida lake, came into the room. Upon her head she was carrying a table of food. (The table was one foot high, built like a footstool, you will understand.) Graciously bowing, she put it down before me.

"There was white boiled rice in a brass dish, a bowl of kimchi, two boiled eggs, a dish of snails and a cup of sauce called 'Chang.' The maid sat down on the floor to watch me eat, and folded her plump, dirty little hands in her lap. Together we said grace, then I picked up the eggs quickly before she could peel them. I knew the table talk would open up with, 'How old are you?' It always does in the East, and really as conversation it's quite as good as 'This is quite a spell of weather we are having.'

"I confessed to my twenty-five years—then to prevent any further probe into my past by the next inquiry which I knew would be, 'How many sons have you?' I brought out a little compass that I carry in my bag, and her interest in it was so great that she forgot the rest of the catechism.

"After supper the little maid took up my table,

balanced it cleverly on top of her head and disappeared through the door. Neatly done!

"My host next appeared—a very dignified gentleman in a suit of spotless white made after the ample fashion of this country. In no way was his composure compromised by having to double his long length to enter the four-foot door. He greeted me with stately courtesy, and behind him there followed his wife, eldest son of fifteen perhaps, two demure but very curious little girls of twelve and ten, and a domestic sequence of better babies and more of them. The wife, I knew at once as the Christian of the household, for her greeting 'Are you resting in the grace of God?' spoke of her faith.

"She asked me to tell of the doctrine to her husband. I was dead tired, you must know, Daddy dear, and wanted nothing so much as quiet and a bath and bed. But here was a chance to read a chapter from the Book of John and to tell this man that the Son of God came to this world to live and die for him, and that if there had never been another man born but this particular Korean that sacrifice would have been made just the same. The debt He paid, was for the individual debtor. That's something to talk about, and when you have the opportunity to put it up to one who hears it for the first time the thrill is so great that often after a day of visiting among these people I lie awake long

into the night marvelling at the miracle of the revelation entrusted to me.

“Now, Daddy, you are going to ask where I slept and how I slept that night. My load of bedding and food box did not arrive. Samogie had had his troubles at the foot of the trail and after my little audience left me, I wandered out into the starlight, and took an inventory of the accommodations of the village.

“Sometimes when I am in the country I sleep in a church—the tiniest straw-thatched hut you can well imagine, but last night without cot or bedding this was unthinkable. Of course there was a public inn, perhaps with two rooms, but at this time of night it would be well occupied by sleeping coolies. When I walked back to the home where I had been so warmly welcomed I was sure that I should meet the family moving out of their one warm room, to give it to me, and oh, how this always makes me feel! This is just what happened. The rolls of quilts had been taken to some neighbour’s overcrowded little home, and everything for my comfort for the night according to their simple code of living and hospitality, had been provided. I thanked that dear woman and accepted the loan of her *whole house* for the night.

“Daddy, have you ever slept on a stone floor? This one was hot, too, you will remember, and after you are well cooked on one side you turn

over for the final basting on the other. And you don't sleep a wink the first time you try it. In the morning you feel perfectly kiln-dried, but it is some satisfaction after this experience to be certain that you'll never warp or curl up at the edges when you get damp.

"At daybreak I arose, dressed and stole out of the door as quietly as I could. The little servant was already astir. I found her in the kitchen (a lean-to with a dirt floor) next my room, complaisantly feeding pine tops into the fireplace under the family pot to cook the breakfast. In that early morning light her innocence and plumpness and dimples didn't stand in the way of her looking diabolical to *me*. The flues of that fireplace ran under the floor that had been baking me and raising my temperature all night.

"Had she been crouching there through those sweltering hours making it hot for me? That idea would spoil the day, so I stopped thinking about it, turned from the hut and walked quickly down the village street to enjoy the delicious air of the morning.

"There was a light haze rising from the ground that floated over the brown straw thatches and melted into the morning mists—the smoke and vapours from a hundred chimney pots set in the foundation stones of the snug homes of the people. It was breakfast time. Paper doors were being

thrown back and men in all stages of dishabille were straggling into the yards and into the street. I had no idea of being surrounded by a crowd of them to be asked how old I was and how many sons I had, that early in the morning, so I ran up a side street, to climb the hill that guards the village.

"The morning air was fine and the run out through the village street and up among the low pines of the mountainside was a bracer for the day. There was a little boy up there gathering pine tops and sweeping up the dried needles for the day's fuel. He was singing a weird chant in a high, wavering staccato and after a few tries I joined in, and we made it a duet. I forgot the hot, stuffy hours of the night as I climbed and climbed, and then turned to look about me. Terraced paddy fields stretched below to where a river wound through the valley. Snuggled up close to the village were patches of lettuce and turnips, bright green spots among the fall grasses and brown brush of the roadside. The sun was throwing amethyst shadows among the hollows of the hills and touching the peaks with rose.

"At the side of the path was a huddle of rocks, four-sided and fifty feet high, that had been thrown up or set down there (whichever it was) in some upheaval when the little hills skipped and lost their balance æons of ages ago. Carved in

bas-relief upon the sides of three of these granite pillars were figures in robes of stony folds that flared out gracefully at the hems and caught in at the waist with cord and tassels (stone, too). You know, Daddy, I just had to stop and run my hand over their quaint lines—especially the cord and tassels. They were so like the cord and tassels on the puffy marble pillow that rested on Colonel Crockett's grave in the old cemetery in Fayette.

"I am writing this letter sitting on a tainted Standard Oil can in the straw-thatched church while I am waiting for the women to finish their family cooking for the day and come together for the morning Bible lesson. This is to be my work out here, and this is the first time I have been out alone among the country churches. I love it. More anon, Folly."

The garden hose suddenly became kinked and twisted about until a spray drenched the syringa bush and Poinsettia sat down heavily upon the porch, wiping her eyes upon her short sleeves.

"Now ain't dat poo lamb just clingin' to the cross, sleepin' on stones and eatin' things what ain't in de cook book, and like as not when she gets them idolaters converted they most probably will turn out to be Scientists or something else. Oh, Lord, I wish she'd come home. I'm a-longin' for the sight of her pretty face."

"Poinsettia, don't sit there in the damp. Turn

the lights on in the hall, and bring me a wrap. It is growing chilly and I am taking cold. That syringa scent is so heavy it's making my head ache."

"Oh, come on, Emily; don't go in yet. Let's take a drive. The house is as lonesome as a tomb. We'll go out to listen to the new orchestra at Wildwood. You can make it all right if you take my arm. Do you know how much better you look since you began those hot water treatments? Why don't you bob your hair?"

Fred Holt helped his sister into the roadster with a courtesy unusually tender, a courtesy that had come to him since Frances went away. The car glided from the curb and swung into the long procession that was moving in the direction of the open country and Wildwood.

Poinsettia coiled the hose, unscrewed the nozzle, and placed all under the porch. Then she shook the wet syringa bush to watch the heavy drops fall on the lawn below, wishing all the while that Rip were there to catch the impromptu shower full on his worthless head.

She went into the silent house, turned off the lights and climbed the stairs. Poinsettia was never in too much of a hurry to pause at the landing and stand in awestruck admiration before a wall-hanging brought from China. It was of blue satin decorated with a huge dragon of needlework, crimson

and green, silver and gilt, that writhed and clawed in embroidered contortions through a grotesque design, bringing up in a ferocious head, with flaming jaws and a forked tongue that darted after a ball in the border.

“Crockydiles! dat’s what dey is. Twistin’ and a-swallerin’ dey selfs. Dey eyes is jes’ a-glarin’ invisibility. An’ dey’s ragin’ aroun’ like de debbil seekin’ whomsoever dey can devour. Oh, Lordy, ain’t it a happy time oveh dar!”

Poinsettia’s ancestry had been demon worshippers not so many generations ago. She passed down the hall to her own little room over the back porch. She was thinking of Frances on the other side of the world and she was going to read up on the people her darling had gone to serve.

The Book of Knowledge had been Poinsettia’s constant solace and source of amusement since she had given up the movies. She opened it now and turned to the big map pasted on the cover,—unfolded it, and traced a thumb-marked and soiled line that ran from San Francisco to Honolulu and then to Yokohama.

A long time she puzzled over the converging lines of the steamship routes, then turned to the chapter headed “Customs and Manners.” She began reading at the paragraph describing the headdresses of peoples of the Orient, a popular chapter with her.

The man of Korea had high cheek bones, narrow eyes and puffy eyelids, and his long hair was twisted into a knot on the top of his head. Over that he wore a hat woven of horsehair, three good sizes too small for him, held in place by strings tied under his chin. His outer coat was of stiff white muslin, padded with cotton and lined with blue—cleverly cut, fitting well about the shoulders and flaring in shapely lines to the ankles. Poinsettia had developed a marvellous interest in *The Land of the Morning Calm* since Frances had gone to make it her home.

She was so absorbed that she had not marked the flight of time, and she was startled to hear the chug of the roadster stopping at the side gate, and the squeak of the garage door as Rip Van Winkle threw it open. She closed the big book, listened until she heard Mr. Holt say good-night to Rip, and knew that he had entered the house and the family life was ended for that day. Then she took out the pins that held her crinkly hair, fluffed it out to see the effect if it were bobbed, said her prayers and went to bed.

VII

AUNT EMILY'S QUEST

MRS. EMILY ALDERMAN announced at the breakfast table that she was going to Korea within the month. The air became electric, and the excitement instantaneous. Fred Holt threw down his *Tribune* and grasped the arms of his chair, while Poinsettia let a cup of coffee spill over the table, and a plate of waffles fall to the floor.

"When did you make up your mind to that, Emily? What an inspiration! Did you lie awake all night to catch up with it?"

"It's no sudden determination, Fred, I've been working over it for months."

"It's an inspiration all the same. But, Emily, it's ten thousand miles going west—straight three weeks of travel, and I haven't forgotten the fight Doc Ellers and I put up to get you started for the Sanitarium last year—and that was only two hundred miles up the line. And you won't go to Richmond but once a year. What Tourist Agency has been working on you?"

"The same one that has been sending you all those Far East Guides, held together with a rubber band, and hidden under your pillow!"

“Hah! Poinsettia and you have been house cleaning again! If there’s any privacy about this place I don’t know it. I can’t put a thing away where it isn’t found. A time is coming when I am going to take my favourite necktie and my extra pair of socks, and my letters in my teeth, slink down the back stairs, into the yard, and there I am going to dig a hole and bury them. To stay there until I want them. Poinsettia, this coffee is cold; bring another cup, and hurry up the waffles, will you?”

He threw his napkin on the table, picked up the *Tribune* and turned to the market reports.

Poinsettia gave an extra push to the swinging door, and disappeared into the pantry, taking the funny page with her. The paroquettes twittered in sensitive sympathy for the air was charged with the feel of a domestic squall. Mrs. Alderman picked up her napkin, held one corner to her lips and unfolded its ample whiteness with a gesture of hoisting a sail to the breeze. Since her sanitarium experience Mrs. Alderman’s breakfast had consisted of bran muffins, and soft boiled eggs. This morning she fed the bran muffins—all of them—to Absalom. It was very quiet, except for the nervous rattle of the newspaper. Suddenly the pantry door swung back, and Poinsettia appeared with a steaming plate of syrupy waffles and set them down before the master of the house.

"Dem waffles is automobile waffles, Mistah Fred,—dey's got de same dents in 'em what's on de tiahs of youah cah—and dey's made special. I bought dat iron myself jes' for you, sir. 'Tain't noboddy else has got tiahs and waffles to match."

She was twisting one corner of her apron now in a nervous flutter. The *Tribune* was lowered, and Fred Holt's eyes caught hers over the top of it.

"Get out of my sight, nigger, quick, till I cool off!—I beg your pardon, Emily, for storming around like this, but it makes me sore to have my room cleaned and everything put away where I can't find it. When I open my door after one of Poinsettia's attacks things look in order, but that confounded suction sweeper has swept up all of my papers and everything that's loose, and if I obeyed that impulse, I'd tear the whole room up and scatter everything around just the way I want it. You will never know what exasperation it is to a man to be in a hurry and to want a thing and never be able to find it when he knows exactly where he put it that morning.

"Ought to control myself, did you say? Well, I'm here to tell you that when I run a temperature I never get any credit for the ice packs I put on. I just get jumped on for the flare-up."

Fred Holt finished his breakfast in silence, picked up his paper and started for the office.

Mrs. Alderman listened for the sound of the self-starter. In a moment he was back, his head thrust through the dining-room door.

"I'll have a lot of new folders and guides in the mail to-day. You and I will have the time of our lives going over them to-night. Emily, don't work up a headache over this morning's mess. Forget it, and be sure to come down to dinner."

Mrs. Alderman arose and went to her desk where every pigeonhole bulged hand-books, travel information, manuals, plans, charts and itineraries, and took up the work of the hour, which was to read, reread, carefully estimate and sort this abundant advertising.

"Fred's in a state of nerves," she mused, as she unfolded the crisp sheets of a yellow time table, and fell to studying the map showing incredibly straight lines of thousands of miles of railway with not a curve between the Mississippi and the Coast. "What has upset him so?"

She smiled to think that he, too, had been unfolding crisp sheets of yellow time tables and studying the same maps that had been her pursuit for months; but she was puzzled at his display of temper when discovered.

What she did not know was that December wheat, under heavy manipulation, had developed a strong bull movement, in the last few days, that had squeezed the profits out of his business for the

season, and that his hopes of the trip to Korea had gone into an eclipse only that morning.

However, disappointment and balked expectation never affected Fred Holt's naturally elastic spirits for any length of time. That evening he breezed into the house and threw a lot of pamphlets into Mrs. Alderman's lap. His enthusiasm and buoyancy were contagious. At dinner, immediately after the soup, layers of crinky sheets of information about ships, rates, sailing dates and alluring cuts of foreign scenes were spread over the table. The excellence of Poinsettia's cooking was entirely ignored, and the literature became rather buttery, but the two eager enthusiasts continued to study maps and discuss routes.

"If you sail from Vancouver for Yokohama, you are only nine days on the water and on your overland journey you can take in the scenery of the Canadian Rockies, Emily. Why don't you decide on that route?"

"And embark on a ship flying an alien flag, when by going to San Francisco I can board one sailing under the Stars and Stripes? If the boat goes down, I don't want a British Union Jack or a Japanese Sun Spot marking the bull's eye in the rings I'll make, I want to sink under my own colours. And I want you to know that I don't care at all about scenery or sightseeing. This trip has just one end in view and that is to bring

say that with a native guide who speaks English one can travel anywhere in the Orient. If I tell her I am coming she will leave her work, and go down to the mission station; and that doesn't suit my plan of attack. I don't want soft welcomes and sweet dallyings to break in on my purpose. It's going to be a direct thrust, a battle of wills, a smash-up of delusions, and a triumphant get-away. Probably we shall not go down to the station at all. I can outfit her at Yokohama. The McClurgs say it is possible to catch the same boat I go over on as it returns from Shanghai. Mr. McClurg will do anything to help me in this. Fred, you should hear him tell of the aggravations of the life over there, and general conditions, and then he did not see Korea!"

Poinsettia worked with her head in the clouds during the last week of preparation for Miss Emily's journey. Her imagination was fired by descriptions in the travel guides of the sights of Hawaii, Japan and China. The rubber banded packet of folders beneath Mr. Holt's pillow was abstracted every morning, and in determined, unheeding disregard of his wrath, the servant of the house sat down upon the floor, spread them out, and studied their contents in delighted absorption. Time tables, deck plans, and steamer regulations, were passed over, it was the pictures and descriptions of the great Buddhas of Japan that held her.

"Graving images! Carved out o' stones, and more 'n dey living size! Jes' miraculous, I'll say dey is. Eyes is sartinly ecclesiastic—vampin' all aroun' and enticin'. Must be powerful tantalin' to bow down befo' dem, at de soun' of de cornet, flute, dulcimer and de sackbut like Daniel didn't. Howsomever I'se observin' dat dey's got der fingers crossed in case what yo' prayers doan come true! Oh Lordy, ain't it a happy time? But oh, how's Miss Emily going to stan' it, goin' dah? Gettin' off o' trains, and on trains, and how-somever is she a-goin' to climb the ladders up de sides of dem big ships, 'thout nobody helpin' her? Dat's what I'm studyin'."

One afternoon she burst into Mrs. Alderman's room with the question, "An' what you goin' do, Miss Emily, when you gits off de ship, and if yo' cain't get no seat in de train? De Book of Knowledge says dey's twenty millions of natives in Korea, and dey's one railway and a couple o' side tracks fo' all o' dem, and it looks like to me what maybe you couldn't get aboard."

"Poinsettia, why do you ask such useless questions? I shall call chair coolies, and have them bring long poles, and rig up a conveyance for me. It will be a most awful mode of travel but I have made up my mind to it; and all of my reading lately has been to this end.

"Did you put this pot of beans in my trunk?"

"Yessum,—dat chile ain't tasted nothin' like dem for all dese years."

"And this bag of doughnuts, under my best hat?"

"Yessum. I done dat too. Dey'll come in handy some day. I been a-readin' up on what de eats o' dat country is. Say, Miss Emily, ef yo' doan find no chair coolies handy, jes' you make dem foreigners rig yo' up two mules, hitch 'em tandum, and have dem tie a trabeling box between dem, and jog along oveh de country dat way. Dat's what de Book of Knowledge says dey do."

"That's in China, Poinsettia, your geography is mixed. At least there are rickshaws in Korea, and Frances says the roads are being improved, and there may be cars there in time."

Mrs. Emily Alderman's trip to Korea was a matter of astonishment among her friends. She had been known as a semi-invalid for years, almost a shut-in, and a recluse, and now she was preparing to leave the elaborate system of comfort and ease she had built about herself for the uncertainties of Pullmans, Union stations, hotels and ships, and the unimaginable exigencies of life in a foreign country. Her trouble could not have been hardening of the arteries, or else Dr. Ellers had more skill than anybody gave him credit for. It was plain to everyone that the Holt Grain and Flour Mills must be on the verge of bankruptcy or

Fred Holt never would have let his sister make this journey alone. Opinion was divided as to the possibility of her bringing Frances back to America with her. There were a few whose sympathies had responded deeply and intelligently to the radiant sacrifice this girl had made when she went to Korea as a missionary—a volunteer for life. These few were certain of the vision and faith that had taken her into this work. They were sure too of the authority that would hold her to it. But others who disbelieve in the voices of the soul and callings and promptings from the unseen, gave it as their opinion that the hallucination that had carried Frances Holt into this absurd career would suffer immediate and final collapse at the sight of her aunt. The devotion that had inspired this journey surely could not be lost upon one who professed the top-heavy ideals of a missionary, and when the aunt urged her return in terms of reason and sound sense it was to be expected that she would come back to the natural and normal life of Fayette, and settle down to live like a Christian.

With one accord these praised the high aspiration and ardour that Frances started out with—but there is reason in everything, and she had done her part, overdone it perhaps, and now that she could return to America under a rational pretext and with so little embarrassment it was her duty

and privilege to do so. So moralized the unbelievers.

* * * * *

Mrs. Alderman made a very appealing and impressive figure on the deck of a great ocean liner, when the day dawned that she should sail for the Orient. The weather was clear, the passage would be smooth and all omens promised well.

There was the liveliest sense of adventure in this unprecedented journey that she was undertaking.

Her cabin was upon the promenade deck, and as she drew back the green curtain before the open door a delightful array of gifts of fruit and flowers occupied every available space, and blocked the window. The whole collection she ordered sent immediately to the dining room.

The crowd upon the dock was the usual throng of finely groomed, intelligent and friendly Americans bent upon getting a thrill out of wishing "bon voyage," and watching the majestic departure and sailing out to sea of the liner. Steam was up, and the anchor hoisted, when someone on board threw a roll of ribbon (paper ribbon tightly wound) into the air, holding to the free end. As the roll unfurled and fell, it was caught by his friend standing at the wharf, and an instant flash of recognition and pulse of sympathy passed between the two. The ribbon tugged in the wind

and a lingering, longing farewell was sent over its fluttering length.

More rolls of ribbon—red and blue, yellow and green,—hundreds of them—tossed from the boat to hands held high to catch them, made a rainbow, bridging the distance between mates and pals, brothers and sisters, fathers and sons, mothers and daughters.

The deep-toned siren sounded, the orchestra played “My Country, 'Tis of Thee,” and the great ship, undulating to the throb of its engines, moved away from the shore. The crowd on the dock responded with a good-bye cheer, and the ribbons rolled out gaily. But over that rainbow bridge and along the streamers were signalled piteous messages of farewell and heartache and agonies of longing and fear.

Here and there was a face with tightly drawn lips and brave eyes. One girl in particular caught Mrs. Alderman's attention as she threw a roll of ribbon to be caught by a prim little woman standing at the rail. The streamer played between the hands that held it. The woman smiled a trembling, pathetic smile as the ship receded slowly, pitilessly, in irresistible movement. The limit was reached, the ribbon stretched, then parted and fluttered to the water. A slender hand waved good-bye, the girl was lost in the crowd, and the prim little woman with the dangling end of the

torn tie in her hand went white and leaned for support against the cabin door.

Mrs. Alderman spent that afternoon in inspecting the arrangements of the cabin which was to be her home for seventeen days. The bath and the bed were her special concern, and after noting all the nautical contrivances to keep things in place when the boat pitched about in a storm, she called her cabin boy, a Chinese, gave him the "once over," and made him show her how to open and close the port-hole and how to put on the life preserver. This cabin boy's enthusiasm for his work and his devotion to that particular cabin and to her needs and comforts was a credit to his trainers, but Mrs. Emily Alderman disliked the thought of having a man acting as maid in her room. Her irritation increased as she realized that he worked like an automaton. She could not make him do anything he did not want to, or that had not been set down in the rules in which his instructor had drilled him. Two scratchy blankets arranged in window drapery effect, at the foot of her bed, she ordered removed. The boy from China only smiled and continued his activities. Mrs. Alderman in high dudgeon went on deck. She sat down heavily in a steamer chair that was tagged with her name, and looked at the long uneven line of the disappearing shore.

She had told herself that no unreasoning swells

of patriotism should betray her into a show of common sentimentality when the ship sailed out of the harbour; but at this moment she found herself glad, very glad, that she had become vexed with the Chinese cabin boy, for swells of some kind and queer aches about her throat were coming from no one knew where and would surely have developed had she not been so angry.

She turned her head and gave her attention to her fellow travellers.

The people were a cosmopolitan lot, and very interesting. There was a personally conducted party of tourists, bound for Japan and China, retired merchants and bankers with their unretired wives. Most of these men were undertaking the trip to the Orient to check up at first hand impressions of the East with newspaper write-ups and magazine articles; and to acquire grist for Rotary addresses. Two months' travel would give them subject matter for years to come in arguments and discussions as they came up in clubs and Pullman lounges. The customs, religions and politics of these foreign countries could be debated and conclusions drawn far more decisively when one's remarks began with, "When I travelled through Japan," or "When I was in Peking." Their deductions and opinions, too, would be stamped with a finish and finality hitherto wanting.

Their unretired wives were going abroad to

prove to their friends (nearly all of whom had been round the world once at least, so they pleaded when this trip was first urged) that they could accomplish more sightseeing to the twenty-four hours than any other woman who had ever travelled.

Every woman of that party, ere leaving home had made sure in her own mind that she could persuade guides and conductors to admit her into prohibited recesses of palaces and temples, and the interiors of tombs and vaults never before penetrated by any other tourist.

This voyage was well calculated to speed up the jostle on the social ladder. In the way of shopping too, there was the anticipated piquancy of bargaining for marvellous silks and furs and stones, offered at first hand, duty-less prices, and the thrill afterwards of displaying one's purchases and of showing off one's expert judgment and cleverness in overreaching the native sellers. The hazard and chance of the encounter with the customs officers, at the close of the journey, when all one's shrewdness and judgment were played up in the brave game of outwitting the government we love, was an anticipated experience not catalogued in the Guides, but real, just the same. This whole crowd was in blithe good spirits that day and radiated buoyant expectation.

Mrs. Alderman, deeply interested in this party,

had not noticed a short woman, wearing a squirrel coat badly cut and slightly worn at the front closing and the cuffs, who had advanced from the salon, and now sat down abruptly in the chair next hers. She turned with a start when she heard the creak and stretch of the rattan. The woman threw her short and puffy legs over the footrest, and looked up at Mrs. Alderman.

"I always get ready for it, just like this, and if it makes you seasick to look at me, call the deck steward and have him move your chair to starboard. Boy, bring me a whiskey soda, and be quick about it." Mrs. Alderman stared at the newcomer and did not reply. She had always disliked the effusive sociability of garrulous women, and if this one was about to develop symptoms of premeditated seasickness she was quite ready to act upon her suggestion. But at that moment it was impossible to change her chair, for the deck stewards and all the available boys were engaged in placing the members of the tourist party and in answering their questions.

The woman in the fur coat drank the whiskey, then ordered a table and a full bottle and glasses to be set at her side.

"Have a whiskey, won't you? It's the best thing for seasickness. I always begin with it, and then I take Mothersills,—a brown and a pink capsule,—and soda after that,—and then lemons."

"And after that if you are not sick, what do you do?" inquired Mrs. Alderman caustically.

"Oh, but I always am, by that time, and then I block my ears. I'm going to take Mothersills now. I'm wondering how much money those tourist swells are going to leave in Yokohama. I used to live in Yokohama before we got shook down and burnt out by the earthquake. An earthquake's no joy, I am here to tell you. Ever been to the Orient before?"

"No." Mrs. Alderman was not given to confidences, and she was quite willing that the conversational initiative should rest with the stranger.

"The first thing you do then is to put on a woolen band, right over your stomach. You'll get dysentery if you don't. It's a darn unhealthy country, awfully hot."

Mrs. Alderman raised her field glasses, her whole attention upon the horizon, with frowning intensity.

"Only them that's lived in the East knows it. If you'll ask me I'll tell you the Japs have overfertilized their country."

"All books of travel agree that the Japanese are an extremely clean people."

"Sure, but the sewage from sixty million people isn't lilacs in summer. You'll like Honolulu. There's trees that's blossomed out like geraniums, and the Hoola dancers, and the surf riding. Be-

lieve me, that's one sport even Hollywood ain't got. But it gets me to see American blondes playing around with chocolate Malays. I'm used to a lot, but it takes them that's lived in foreign countries to get a line on the men."

"You dislike Orientals?"

"I ain't got any use for any of them. Why, the last time I crossed to 'Frisco the steward sat a Chinese girl at my table. She spoiled three meals a day for me. Every time I ordered anything from the menu card she'd order the same thing. When I'd finish my soup and look up, she'd be finishing the same kind of soup, and it was just that way down to the dessert. It got on my nerves so I made them seat her at another table."

Mrs. Alderman continued to study the horizon.

"See that little woman that almost fainted when the paper ribbons broke? I know her type. She's a missionary. Most of the business people over here knock 'em. But I don't. I saw one of them once teaching some Japanese women in a little country place up in the mountains. Her face looked like an angel. But take it from me they ain't gettin' anywhere. It'll take a million years to get the fear of God into Emperor worshippers. Have a cigarette? No? Well, I'm going to my room. I'm beginning to get light in the head, that's the beginning of it. So long!"

VIII

FRANCES AT WORK

AS the steamer, crossing the straits between Japan and Korea, pulled up at the dock in Fusan, Mrs. Alderman stood at the rail, and beside her was the prim little woman of the torn ribbon. During the voyage across the Pacific an adventure in friendship had sprung up between the two. It had had its beginning on the day when Mrs. Alderman had fled from the advances of the woman of the squirrel coat. It was a strange intimacy, begun experimentally, advancing to a clash, then resumed, ripened and cemented by a mutual appreciation of each other's fighting qualities, and a passionate desire to triumph in the battle which was to be pulled off up among the mountains of Korea—the battle staged by the aunt from America.

Mrs. Alderman had found in Mrs. Adison a companion who could sit at her side for hours,—silent. Mrs. Adison had a way of leaning toward one—of fixing her attention closely upon the movement of the lips, and of narrowing her eyes in rapt attention when one spoke, which was very stimulating to confidences. At the end of a

steamer-chair acquaintance of but two days Mrs. Alderman was amazed to find that she had been so baited on by the interested and sympathetic hazel eyes in the piquant face at her side that she had poured forth in detail the story of her love for her niece, of the strange infatuation that had taken Frances to Korea, and of her own determination to bring her back to America.

"When have I ever chattered, as I have to that woman? I verily believe that snug within that little ego there sits a cowled priest, and I have poured my tale into the ear of her confessional like a garrulous old *penitente*."

Mrs. Adison had listened in astonishment to Mrs. Alderman's statement that upon her arrival in Korea she meant to go at once to her niece in the hill country, avoiding the formality of visiting the mission station where Frances made her home when not at work.

"Do you know that you will have to travel on a river boat, and perhaps by chair or rickshaw over mountain roads? There may be a little Ford jitney, and there may not. You cannot imagine the hardships and difficulties to which you will be exposed."

"I have sense enough, and the natural intelligence, I hope, to cope with any situation that may be forced upon me."

There was a veiled smile in the depths of the

narrowed eyes, as their owner gave the American a keen glance of appraisement.

"Have you the equipment of a cot, rugs, and coats and cooking utensils that you will need in the country? You know you leave all the comforts and most of the necessities you have been accustomed to, when you quit the railway."

"I have thought of everything from sleeping bag to spirit stove and concentrated foods. I am fully prepared for every emergency. I have taken every precaution to make the journey a success."

Mrs. Adison's glance was upon the gray line of the horizon,—fusion of sky and sea; her hands were clasped tightly. Every fibre of her being throbbed with indignation at the insolence and assumption of the woman at her side. Was she not scheming, deliberately, to break down the vision and idealism of a missionary? By her own confession she was planning to go to her niece, unannounced, and in the bewilderment and ecstasy of the shock she would crush devotion and consecration—would beat down aspiration, vision and faith. The light in the eyes of the little woman blazed, and she shrank back unconsciously from the schemer.

"I pity you," she said at last. "You are a determined woman, are blind to the passion of the girl for her work,—you are taking no account of inspiration. You are snapping your fingers at the

authority of God Almighty. I am a missionary too, and I know that Frances Holt will not return to America with you. She has volunteered for life."

Mrs. Alderman had put down her knitting bag with an abrupt gesture. Her hands were trembling, and she clasped them about her knees to steady them. When she spoke, however, her voice was under control.

"One might think I was about to sack a cathedral or plunder a Holy of Holies, just because I want to save a girl from religious hysteria, and bring her back to her birthright. I don't see why you missionary people always assume that you have a monopoly upon divine direction!"

"Do you believe in prayer?"

"Who doesn't?"

"I mean in answered prayer."

"Of course I do. Every church member does, especially when he gets what he wants."

"How can you pray that a missionary may leave her divinely appointed work and come home with you?"

"I haven't prayed about this journey. Why should I? I know what I want, and I am going after it."

"A pagan prays to his fetish when he goes to battle, but you—you are purposing to despoil God Himself."

"Don't consider my feelings at all, my dear. Calling names is perhaps a prerogative of missionaries, and those who judge the earth. I don't mean to decimate the ranks. There are hundreds of girls who could come out here to teach these Koreans the Bible, and I mean to send one as Frances' substitute."

"Consecrate and ordain her yourself?"

"Mercy, how you can put it. Missionaries aren't a separate order of beings. You can pick one up almost anywhere. I know of lots of girls who would come over here for the experience and the trip."

"But they will not stay."

"Why should they? They could do all that was expected of them in their term of service and then go home, and let someone else come out for the trip and the experience the next time. A system of rotation and exchange would be excellent."

Mrs. Adison put her hands before her face, and there were tears in her eyes as she spoke.

"Is that all you comprehend of the consecration and the calling of this work? What about the language, and the effect upon the Koreans of this long distance, impersonal, commercialized method of presenting the love of Jesus Christ and His atonement? My only child is in America, and I am going back to this work alone. If what you believe is true, the agony and heartbreak of this

sacrifice is an absurdity that one could easily side-step by substitution."

"Was it your daughter who held the other end of your paper ribbon when the boat sailed?"

"It was."

"Was she born in Korea?"

"Yes, we are separated for the first time."

"You have one great longing?"

"You know it. The thrill that will come to you when you look into the eyes of Frances, and hold her soft, warm body in your arms, and feel her heart beat against yours. That's my longing, too."

Mrs. Alderman leaned toward the speaker, her eyes half closed to hide an attempt at self-mastery. Suddenly her hand closed over the thin one of the other woman, her rings pressing into the flesh beneath.

"It's settled then. She is the one I shall send out here to take Frances' place. She will have the language. Never speak again of the heartaches or sacrifices, if you allow ridiculous sentiment to balk the proposition I am making you."

Mrs. Adison rose abruptly and walked the length of the deck to her stateroom. She was struggling at emotional high pressure to get a clear view of her feelings. She was annoyed that she could not reply to Mrs. Alderman's subtle arguments with a "get thee behind me" word of finality. Had

the touch of her hand and the instant show of sympathy taken the edge from her studied affront to the faith to which she and Frances were committed?

She was sure of the answer she would make ultimately, but for the moment the daring of the plan and its fascinating glitter threw the radiance of a sunset over her horizon, and blazed across her future like a meteor. With all of her being she had endeavoured to train her daughter in her own faith, with the hope that this daughter would offer her life in voluntary service to God, and that she might take up the work that her mother would some day lay down. But Marion Adison had shown no inclination for this calling, she had never been touched by its claims.—But if she could be sent to Korea for a short term, would she not develop a taste for it, would she not then make it her choice? The thought was ecstasy.

Long into the night she lay staring at the white ceiling of her cabin,—at the green curtain swinging rhythmically with the motion of the ship,—at the brass-trimmed port-hole, framing the view of a bright sky, shot with pale stars.

Then tides of accusation and self-condemnation swept her. She had been weak; missionaries were chosen of the Lord. They could never be allured or coaxed into the service. The arrogance that would seek to change divine selection and authority

for the work of the Lord in Korea! Oh, why had she listened to it! Mrs. Alderman's proposal was sacrilegious and wicked; and on the morrow she would make the answer it deserved. With this decision Mrs. Adison fell into a light sleep.

The weather was rough the next day, and non-descript figures swathed in rugs, lay limp in their steamer chairs, smiling or frowning wanly at the unaffected passengers who were staggering along the deck, trying to keep a foothold on calked planks that came up to meet their unsteady steps.

Mrs. Alderman with ill concealed irascibility permitted the Chinese "boy" to help her to the deck. She sank into her chair with a quick glance at the one to the left, for she hoped that the woman from Yokohama would be confined to her room that day. She felt unequal to the sight of her preparations for an attack of seasickness.

Mrs. Adison had never been ill on shipboard, and this morning she was already in her chair when Mrs. Alderman appeared. Good mornings were exchanged, and crisp comments upon the weather and the condition of their fellow travellers. Mrs. Alderman's manner was a bit detached,—she picked up a book.

A long time Mrs. Adison sat looking at the whitecaps,—feeling the exhilaration of the wind in her face. She turned, and her glance rested quizzically on Mrs. Alderman.

"When you go into the hill districts of Korea you will need a guide."

Mrs. Alderman looked up. She raised her eyebrows and replied querulously, "How else could one manage, with no knowledge of the language?"

"Why don't you ask me to go with you? I know the conditions of the country and the situations you will meet, from experience."

Mrs. Alderman sat up with an exclamation. "You! You would join the Spoiler? We should fly apart at the first sight of Frances. Why don't you reply to my proposal of yesterday?"

"The decision is not mine. God and Marion only are concerned with it. She has never volunteered for the life out here. That incident is closed." She was making an effort to control her voice. "Oh, I envy you your Frances! Why should your girl be chosen for this work, and mine never hear the call?"

As the boat docked at Fusan, Mrs. Adison took command of the travelling arrangements, and Mrs. Alderman found herself aboard a very comfortable sleeper compartment style—bound for Taiden. She was secretly gratified that this introduction into Korea should begin with a trip at night. She was fully prepared to detest the country and dislike the people, and for ten hours she shouldn't have to look at either. At Taiden the transfer to

another railway was managed very efficiently by Mrs. Adison. Crowds of Koreans in full cry after trains that looked easy to catch, and apparently had no intention of leaving without them, blocked the platform. The American aunt was not to be subjected to the jostlings of this rush. With the aid of red-caps and "jickey" men she was spirited around the throng, and seated in the down train. Mrs. Adison was leaving.

"Good-bye, Mrs. Alderman. This is where I take the train for Song Ju. Perhaps we shall meet again some day. The woman in the seat next you is Miss Caraway. She's bound for the country, too, and in her care you will make the trip easier than if you hire guides. I am sorry for you. You face defeat."

Miss Caraway turned quickly and hurried forward to welcome the stranger.

"You are Aunt Emily. I'd have recognized you from your picture. It's on her dresser."

"And I know who you are too. But don't say her name. I can't endure it now. Evidently I have been transferred to your care. I feel like a registered collie the way I'm shipped about. I am going to put cotton in my ears, and shut my eyes, because I don't care to hear the sounds or see the sights in this country. There is nothing that appeals to me."

The night was spent in a Japanese inn, and for

the first time Mrs. Alderman slept upon the floor. The entire service of the hospitable little place was summoned to make the foreigner as comfortable as possible; but she arose in the morning stiff and irascible.

Miss Caraway sent for coolies and chairs, and the journey was begun. It would take but ten hours of travel to reach the little house that Frances Holt made her headquarters when at work among the people of the hills. Late in the afternoon they came to a stream hurrying down a ravine and dashing over its stones until it reached a sluice made of hewn timbers that carried the water to a huge overshot wheel, creaking and groaning under the weight that spilled and splashed about its rim. The tiny mill was a structure of pine timbers, banked with sod, and thatched with straw. Mrs. Alderman's coolies eased her chair to the path, and she turned impatiently as Miss Caraway's chair came abreast.

"The sun is dropping behind the hills and I am wondering if we shall reach San Chone by night-fall? If we have lost the way it is time we should know it."

"This day has been terribly trying to you, Mrs. Alderman. But we are on the right trail. I've been this way before and the woman at the last well told me that the 'westerner' lives in the next village. This hut before us is a rice-hulling mill.

Do you hear the fall of the wooden pestle that beats out the grain in a hollow granite bowl? Don't you love the smell of the fresh grain, and the haze of the chaff in the air? "

"It's all picturesque enough, I suppose, but I have had so many sensations to-day that I feel I cannot endure another one. There is a haze about my brother's mill too, but everything in this country is so different, and it's all so depressing."

"I know how it must look to you,—just from America—but don't you think the little fall wild-flowers and the berries at the roadside are lovely? I know Frances loves them, and she gathers them too, as she walks along these paths. She has gone over this trail many times."

A spasm of pain crossed Mrs. Alderman's face. Her eyes closed and tears were on her cheeks. "The isolation, the loneliness of it all—we have not passed one familiar sight to-day. Nothing of the life to which she has been accustomed. Oh, that child! My heart is beating suffocatingly."

The sun had dropped into the notch of a blue hill, and the air was growing chill. There was a hint of rain in the evening clouds. They were travelling now among the rice fields that lay bare and brown, with wisps of gleanings here and there. The reapers, bending under the nodding sheaves of grain, trotted along the path Indian file, keeping time to the roll of an hour-glass drum, and

the beat of a brass cylinder. As the chair coolies pressed forward into the twilight, they too fell into the measure of the drum, and soon were chanting a tale of the way. The path led to a flight of rude stone steps beyond which was a deep pool,—a spring where women were stooping to wash turnips and cabbage.

The coolies stopped and Miss Caraway left her chair to speak to the women, then she entered the door of a low thatched hut where a wall of stones arose from the farther side of the pool. In a few minutes she returned, followed closely by three Korean men, a medley of children and a dog.

"We've reached the place. They all tell me that beyond that group of pines, to the right, is the house of the 'foreigner.' One of the boys will run ahead and light the lamp. There may be no one at home, for the 'foreigner' seems to be out teaching in the next village. I am taking all of these inquisitive sightseers with me, back to the house at the head of the spring. It is threatening rain, and—and—I know you will not want others about when you and Frances meet."

Miss Caraway spoke to the coolies, and they took up the chair again. Looks of intense sympathy passed between them and the American woman. They had carried her all that day, and there was a singular response in their simple natures to a situation they could only divine.

There was no chanting as they advanced this time, and the thrumming of the drum and the clash of the cylinders grew faint in the distance.

Mrs. Alderman's hands were clenched, as the chair swung around the last curve and a little house, eighteen feet, perhaps, by eight, and ten feet high stood out in the half light. Pine timbers, round and unpainted, formed its framework,—the walls were of stone laid up in mud, and a fringe of grey thatch topped its quaint structure.

A narrow porch, one plank wide, ran down its length,—the door was a wooden frame latticed with bamboo and covered with paper. A tiny light struggled to give a welcoming touch to the little domicile. There was a rush of wings overhead, and the swift dart of a swallow through the air.

Mrs. Alderman struggled against the sweep of emotions that were holding her powerless. She arose and stood trembling. One of the coolies came to her side, and lifting one of her hands, put it on his shoulder and led her to the entrance of the hut. The door flew open and she went in. The tiny lamp poured a golden flood into the room, and in its light Emily Alderman saw a narrow cot along the wall. Over it was thrown a Paisley shawl that had once belonged to Alice Holt. Above the cot hung her own likeness, and a picture of her brother smiled from the other wall. There was one chair, and she sank into it.

This, then, was Frances' little house in the wood, the place where she lived when at work in the country,—the place that she had seen in her dreams, and that she had so often talked about! A subtle warmth enveloped her, and she looked about to find the source of a delicious fragrance that filled the tiny room. A sprig of honeysuckle thrust into a bottle was the only ornament on a rude dresser, made of a kerosene box.

She looked up at the one small window. Little curtains of cretonne hung before it. At sight of them—for they were the exact pattern of the ones that had hung before the windows of Frances' own room in Fayette,—on the other side of the world—memories came with a poignancy so sharp, that she trembled in a great sob, and her head dropped to her hands. Her heart was pounding in uneven throbs, for at that moment the high notes of a girl's voice sounded clear on the evening air. It was Frances, coming down the hillside. The steps outside halted, there was a pause—the door flew open—and Frances stood before her!

At the cry that came from behind the paper door, the coolies shouldered the sedan and crept back to the house by the spring. One of them lingered to touch a match to a bundle of pine tops in the firing place of the tiny kitchen. The room where two women knelt would be warm that night.

IX

AUNT EMILY'S DEFEAT

MRS. ALDERMAN slept but little. Long hours the two women had sat, hands clasped, talking of Fred Holt, of friends and the happenings of the home. It was late when Frances had tucked her aunt between the soft folds of her own bedding on the cot; and then rolled up in more blankets and down quilts upon the warm stone floor,—Korean fashion, as she explained.

There were queer rustlings in the rafters overhead, and several times a squirrel had run across the straw thatch. Near morning she had fallen into a light sleep. The sun was well up when she awakened and her eyes caught the yellow glow of early autumn, filtering through the paper door.

Frances had arisen early, and her laugh was heard outside, as she helped Samogie prepare the breakfast. Just then her lovely face appeared in the opening,—she had heard her aunt stirring.

“Top of the morning to you. It’s glorious out here. The crows are wheeling over the rice fields, and the air is delicious. Samogie has filled the teakettle three times, and now turn over on your cot and shut your eyes while he brings a big crock

into your room. It's your bath. You have never seen or imagined anything like it. It's just like Robinson Crusoe's corks. I hope you don't mind Samogie."

"I certainly do. Tell him to stay out of here until I get dressed. I'll not have a man in my room."

"All right; it will flatter Samogie to death that you think he's a man. Here's the cork, isn't it a heavy old thing? I'll push it into the room, and then bring the three kettles of hot water. On this side is the hot spot of your room; it's where the heat from the kitchen pot goes under the stones of the floor. Be careful not to burn your feet."

Mrs. Alderman's bath and toilet was accomplished with considerable difficulty. She missed, acutely, the ordinary conveniences of western living.

"Aunt Emily, are you dressed? Do come out of doors. We're going to have breakfast under the sky. The coolies want to say good-bye to you."

As the American woman appeared on the tiny porch she was surprised into a smile by the sight of her four coolies, standing in a motley row before her. The one who had helped her the night before stepped up quickly and taking from under his coat a live chicken trussed tightly with straw and rope, presented it to her with grave courtesy.

The next man laid a little black pig, also tied with ropes, and squealing in protest, at her feet. The other two brought eggs in half gourds. Mrs. Alderman threw up her hands in protest.

"Are these gifts to me? Tell them to take them back. Yesterday every step of the way I worried about those coolies in their thin cotton clothes—these things have cost more than their wages. What improvidence!"

"Aunt Emily, somewhere on that trip you cried. I know you did. I can see it in the faces of these men. You are in a country of human sympathy and warm hearts. Hours and hours these men have talked about you, and they know you have come half-way around the world to visit your niece. Don't you want me to make them a nice little speech of thanks?"

"Why in the world don't they invent a wheel of some kind to bear the weight that rests upon their naked human shoulders? They strained and groaned under that harness yesterday until I thought I'd lose my mind. I wanted to get down."

"That isn't what I'm going to say. I shall tell them that they do not have any sedans in America, that this was your first trip in one, and that these presents make your heart very happy because you know they love you."

"Say what you please, but I wish they'd go away."

"Aunt Emily, you are going to sit on the porch bundled up in the rugs, and have your breakfast. You can't think how much better it tastes out of doors. Samogie is so happy that you are here that he'll fly into bits unless you let him bring in your food this minute. Did you ever see a boy as cute as Samogie?"

Samogie was advancing at this moment from the little kitchen, with a tray upon his head. His eyes danced with pleasure, for Frances had told him he might prepare the breakfast, and serve what he chose. Upon the tray were two delicious persimmons,—a flame coloured fruit, the size of apples. After prayer, Frances looked up with a laugh. "You never dreamed of anything as good as these persimmons, Aunt Emily. Look over the garden wall—that's the way they grow. Don't they look like tomatoes on an orange tree?"

"They are very good, my dear, but not a novelty. They were served at the sanitarium. You can buy them in many markets at home. What I want to know is, who named that boy Samogie?"

"I suppose his mother. The name means 'number four.' His freckles look like constellations; don't you think? You can trace the Great Bear and Orion, and the Milky Way across one cheek, and the fixed stars are there, too."

"This is the first time in my life that I have used canned milk. Is your milk-man late?"

"Oh, Aunt Emily, you are a dear. Do you think they milk these cows? They don't. These cows plow. Samogie has fried the bacon just right! Where do I get it? A little package comes from father the first of every month. And the eggs, you know where they come from. Aren't you glad the Lord made hens? I suppose there isn't a country in the world where they aren't."

"What are you going to do to-day?"

"It's Sunday, of course you didn't know; why should you? There isn't a thing to remind you of it. Sometimes I have to notch a stick, as Crusoe did, to tell what day it is. I am going to take you to see a little group of believers who meet together week after week, in a cold church, to read the Bible and talk about the Saviour. It's a great sight. The coolies will bundle you into your chair, and I'll walk. Samogie will wash up the dishes and roll up the beds. I'm ready,—but here is the first interruption—a woman from Cheong. She's a dear. I want you to know her."

A Korean woman dressed in white cambric and carrying two books wrapped in white cloth, slipped through the gate and came hurrying toward Frances. She was silent a moment, and Mrs. Alderman had leisure to steal a close look at her. It was the first time she had really observed a Korean woman. There was a sense of excitement in the bearing of the stranger,—her black eyes

were raised to Frances in appeal and controlled passion. Frances went to her quickly. The woman unfastened the tie of her waist and threw it back. An ugly wound, partly healed, extended across the shoulder. She smiled into Frances' eyes brilliantly, gloriously—and knelt to clasp her hand; a few words passed between them. Frances steadied her voice as she spoke to her aunt.

"She was beaten for reading her Bible, but she says the pain isn't there now, it's in her heart. She has run away to come to church. Look at her carefully,—that light in her face, doesn't it make her beautiful?"

"I do not like martyrs, and there's too much starch in her skirts. They're bunchy."

More Koreans were entering the yard, and a happy, congenial little party under the guidance of Miss Caraway came from the house by the spring. The Christians were dressed in spotless white, and each one carried her hymn-book and Bible.

The little church was a neat structure, wearing a jaunty thatch of fresh straw; and someone had swept the yard. A group of early-comers were already inside, singing "What a Friend We Have in Jesus."

"You never heard a pipe organ or cathedral chimes that rang out any sweeter than that song, Aunt Emily. And now you'll catch your breath at the wonder of it, for they are all seated, and

if you will enter this side door with me you'll see something you'll never forget—a group of native Christians.”

Frances drew back the door quickly, and Mrs. Alderman stood before the worshippers, who were seated upon the floor. Forty faces in rapt attention were uplifted to catch the speaker's least word. Many of them were stamped with the zealot's devotion,—some were struggling to grasp truths dawning slowly upon untrained minds, while others were turning the leaves of their Bibles to prove the statements of the preacher.

Mrs. Alderman was not at ease,—strangely contradictory sensations struggled within her. She had not yet told her niece her object in coming to Korea. She was not a coward,—this was certain, but something stronger than her own will was compelling her to a wider sympathy with this preposterous missionary undertaking, and she was indignant that she seemed to be drifting into its current. She could understand nothing of the service, and in a short time she arose and went into the open.

“It's sentiment, sentiment! Sarah Brown could do this work quite as well, and Frances could return with me to live her own life.”

Mrs. Alderman walked down the village street, and stopped before a house where five women in an open room were spinning cotton thread.

The little service was closed, and the native women, with backward glances of newly found, timidly cherished happiness, had returned to their homes. Frances, wide-eyed, elated, joyous, came out of the little door. Closely surrounding her were the leaders among her helpers. She laughed as she sent her flock flying in all directions after Aunt Emily, who had wandered down the village street. She was the first to find her.

"Isn't it interesting? Sometimes I take a hand at it too. You know that is the way your mother made the thread for the family weaving. But oh, the slow drudgery of it. I long for just one cotton spinning machine in every village so the women could have the leisure they need for better things. Many of these women would learn to read, and many more would attend the Bible studies if only they had the time. But I'm learning not to sigh over useless wishes.

"It's going to rain and your coolies are waiting for you."

The rain was dripping from the straw eaves, and the wind was rising, as the two women entered Frances' little home. Mrs. Alderman's loads had arrived, and Frances moved about the tiny room helping Samogie make up the cots,—and arranging for the comfort of the night.

"Aunt Emily, the sight of you is like a breath from the lilacs under my window at home. Are

they—are they still there, and does father pick up the *Tribune* and rush for the office,—forgetting the keys that I always had to run up-stairs after? And does he still lean back in his chair after dinner, with his hands clasped behind his head, telling all the jokes he heard that day? ”

“The day before I left I went into the garage suddenly, and Fred was under the car. He came out all grease and dirt and sat down on the running board. ‘Emily, it’s here I miss her most. There’s no one to hand me the tools, and there are no little brown shoes dancing on the floor, and no bobbed head upside down, flopping around and asking me which screw is loose, and isn’t it fixed yet? Emily, you’ll see her in three weeks; God, I can hardly stand it!—You tell her that sometimes a ghost of a little hand slips over and pats mine on the wheel, and something warm snuggles up to me. Tell her that.’ ”

In a moment the missionary’s head was down in Aunt Emily’s lap, and the young shoulders shook with sobs.

“I’m not scolding you, you understand,” said the agitated old lady, “but I can’t say I’m sorry you show repentance. It’s very becoming you should, and it proves clearly that the hearts of the children have turned to the fathers; and that you’re going back with me upon my return.”

The girl drew her arm closer about her aunt.

"Oh, you make it so hard for me. Tell me, did father send you out here to bring me home? Aunt Emily, I'm going to answer that question myself. He did not. My father believes in me, and I think he understands that this work is work for God, if no one else does. Let's go to bed now, and listen to the dash of the rain against the paper door. Samogie has done his best to make this place warm and comfortable."

Frances lifted her face and smiled. She was in a far away, unseeing mood that told of a soul uplifted above its sordid surroundings. The American aunt, too, was silent—but it was a silence of rebellion and protest.

Both slept lightly through the dragging hours, for the rain dashed against the straw roof of the hut, and soon a steady drip and splash told of a leak, and of water trickling within the room. The lantern threw monstrous shadows against the mud walls, and from somewhere in the village came a querulous clamour, and a human voice in high falsetto quavered into the night, in accompaniment to the quick beating of a drum.

A hand reached out and touched Mrs. Alderman's shoulder. "It's only the night noises of the village, Aunt Emily. Sometimes they are worse. A sorcerer is beating a drum, for someone is ill or has just died. I am crying just a little bit of a soft cry. Where is your hand?"

Mrs. Alderman closed her lips tightly, and drew Frances' pillow nearer her own. Both women slept toward morning, but the aunt was the first to awaken. She arose, threw on the few clothes she had taken off the night before, and to the surprise of Samogie, thrust her cot into the rain-soaked yard, and beckoned him to help her fold the blankets and load them upon the "jickey."

With a satisfied sigh the American aunt threw herself into her travelling chair, still standing by the bamboo gate. It was not long until a pretty brown head, fresh from sleep, was thrust through the door of the house.

"Aunt Emily," exclaimed her niece, "what does this mean?"

"It means that you are to dress quickly, and eat the breakfast on that box by your cot. The coolies will soon be here. I worked it all out in the night, and you are to go with me at once.

"I am going to the station and you will pack up there. Then you will go home to America with me. The McClurgs told me that I could catch the boat I came on, going back, and we'll do it."

Frances' eyes blazed.

"And you are starting now for the compound?"

"I surely am, as quickly as those coolies can carry me. And you are going, too."

"Oh, I am sorry that you have had such a dreadful initiation into itinerating life."

"I'm not the one who cried! The coolies are here."

"I am not going to America, Aunt Emily."

Mrs. Alderman's rings clicked as her hands were clasped in a quick gesture. She recognized on the instant her error in forcing the issue.

"But you will go down to Sen Chun with me."

"Yes, I will go with you, but not to-day. There are five women in a little group at Chin Darrie who are expecting me to-night, and this is the first time that a missionary has ever met with them. Aunt Emily, you know I could not turn down an opportunity of that kind. I had planned that you rest to-day, here in my little mountain home, and then to-morrow we will go down to the mission station, and you will live in my own apartment in the Uhland home; then I can come back and finish the fall itinerating. Aunt Emily, won't we have a precious Christmas together!"

Four coolies were coming into the yard now, bearing a chair for Frances. Samogie had placed a tray of food before Mrs. Alderman. Slowly she drank the coffee and ate the excellent rice.

"I'm up against Holt will, and Holt determination, and Holt grit, and I wonder what else?"

Frances came out of the hut. She was winding a gay green veil about her throat,—the gift of Poinsettia the year before.

"Aren't you a dear to go with me on this trip!"

We are going to a place among the mountains where only five women are Christians. One of them visited a woman in another village, months ago, and heard the story of Jesus Christ. When she came back she brought a Bible with her, and she and four other women have read that book limp. Don't you know it's going to be fun to work with them?"

"What was the scream in the night?"

"A wife being beaten, perhaps."

Mrs. Alderman's coolies appeared at this moment, and smiled a friendly "good morning" as they stooped to get under the burden of her chair. Frances was already in hers. A little hand beckoned and a green veil fluttered as the girl disappeared around a curve in the road. They had gone some miles when Frances' coolies shifted the straw ropes from their red shoulders and lowered the bamboo poles to the side of her aunt's chair.

"Isn't it glorious?" said the girl. "This road is Paradise pavement to me, and the air is ether. The loveliness of this canyon goes to my head and from here I know what it feels like to unfurl my pinions and float, like a bird in the upper air."

The aunt gazed a moment at the beautiful, uplifted face before her.

"Do you see that flaming bunch of lilies high up on the other side of the canyon? I'm thinking about the bush that made Moses stop and listen.

And over on the top of that jagged old peak is a stone altar fit for any incident in the Old Testament. My heart swells into my throat when I think of teaching Genesis to my women to-night."

"Genesis!" scornfully ejaculated the American aunt. "What's that got to do with the lives of these Koreans? They need a million things before they need Genesis."

"It's the beginning, you know," said Frances, looking up at the lilies through her half closed eyes.

"The beginning of what, I'd like to know. In your teaching you ought to begin with English. After you had them well grounded in the language of progress you could introduce Christianity little by little and you'd have a foundation upon which to work."

"Aunt Emily, I'd be a toothless old woman before I could get down to the real thing with my women; and besides, I don't like to teach English, it would be terribly tiresome."

"Frances Holt, are you upon the mission field to do as you please?"

"I surely haven't 'left houses and brethren and sisters and mother and children and lands with persecutions' for anything else."

"You are the most vexing Holt yet. You and your work are one enigma to me. Tell the coolies to go ahead. I shall walk a while."

The American aunt raised her umbrella and

mounted the path with determined strides. Not once did she lift her eyes to the beauty of the hills above, for gazing at the lovely picture of her niece before her. The girl swung easily along the upland road, her eyes turned to the clear blue visible beyond the great divide of the torn rocks above. The glow in her cheeks matched the cerise of the lilies, and the frivolous green veil floated like mist in the clear depths of the air.

Suddenly Mrs. Alderman put her hand to her eyes,—“the pity of it,—the pity of it!” she said to herself. “What is it that holds her here?”

She was breathing quickly when she reached the side of her niece.

“Tell me,” she demanded, between gasps, “what good Genesis is going to do a nation whose trousers are cut like these Koreans. It’s the most senseless garb in the world. I’ve figured that they lose a yard and a half of goods, simply in useless fullness. Why don’t you teach their wives economy? There would be sense in this trip if you were going out to hold a class in domestic science.”

Frances Holt’s clear laugh rang out.

“You’re the most delicious darling; come here quick, I want to kiss you and put your hat on straight. Now sit down in your chair and don’t walk again, or the coolies will tie you in. You are hurting their feelings in being so spry at your age. I heard them say so.”

The aunt seated herself once more to take up the journey.

The road wound among the low hills, and down deep ravines. The missionary leaned back in her chair, with her hands clasped behind her head, and revelled in the physical charm of the scenery. The sky was overcast and threatening rain when the Americans reached the village of Chin Darrie, nestled at the foot of two projecting cliffs.

"Aunt Emily, here are the Christian women come out to welcome us. Did you ever see anything whiter than their clothes? And their faces,—aren't they radiant?"

A company of women was coming down the road from the tiny village behind them.

Mrs. Alderman gave them a searching look, then descended from her chair, and drew open the door of the little building before them. It was a hovel.

"Don't say a thing about the wretchedness of this room. It's dreadful and the poverty of the faithful little group of Christians is pitiful. But this is their meeting place,—their church,—and they have done for us all they could. They have brought mats from their own home to spread upon the floor. Don't judge my other churches by this one. Keep your eyes on my women, dear, and forget the squalor about you. There are two rooms, and I am telling the coolies to fix up the smallest with our cots and rugs, and, dear, I want

you to go to bed at once. You can lie down quietly on your clean cot, while I meet with the women and carry on the service. We'll sing very low, and maybe you will like our music. The Lord does."

Mrs. Alderman threw herself upon the cot for very weariness, and fell into a light slumber. She awakened as the strains of "What a Friend We Have in Jesus," in several keys, came from behind the paper door. She arose, and made her way in the darkness to the little door, and opened it. A congregation of men, women and children crowded the church to suffocation; bright, eager faces many of them were, but there were others also,—blank, hopeless, and lined deeply with superstition, fear and sin,—spirits darkened by ignorance and eyes dulled by toil. Several women nursed babies, pressing heads caked with eczema to their breasts. The air was stifling and odorous.

Crowded about Frances was a group of five Christian women,—a striking contrast to the others, for their faces were uplifted, radiant, and stamped with a hope divine.

Frances turned in happy excitement to her aunt.

"Oh, don't you feel it?—can't you feel it now?—the joy that makes your heart swell and swell until you ache with happiness. A perfectly new lot of women always affect me in this way; and there are men and boys here to-night. I make Chungsey, the Bible woman, let me tell the story

first. Then I am content to take up the study of the Bible with the women."

The lovely brown head bowed a moment in prayer before the wondering, half-frightened gaze of the women crowded close to her. Then with eyes alight and breath responding to a quickened pulse, the young girl poured out the sweetest story ever told.

Long ago a master painted his conception of "The Adoration of the Shepherds." Another "Adoration" was unveiled at that moment, painted upon the background of that Korean hut; the black rafters and begrimed walls, well within the shadow, shaded into the outlines of figures of men and women and little children, with uplifted faces,—wondering, worshipping figures, crowded about the lovely, unknown stranger who had come from a far country, to *their* Bethlehem. To them she was holding forth the Christ-God's only Son—and their only hope. In the light of the lantern thrown full upon her face, they read the message of loving pity that had compelled her renunciation of all she held dear, to bring the message of the angels to them.

Mrs. Alderman knew that tears were rolling down her cheeks, and before that living picture she, too, bowed—defeated, humbled, answered.



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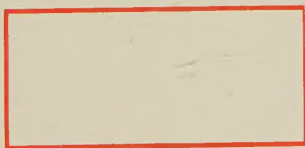
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